I am a heritage because I bring you years of thought and the lore of time — I impart yet I can not speak — I have traveled among the peoples of the earth — I am a rover — Oft-times I stray from the fireside of the one who loves and cherishes me - who misses me when I am gone — Should you find me vagrant please send me home - among my brothers - on the book shelves of .....

ALFRED SANTELL

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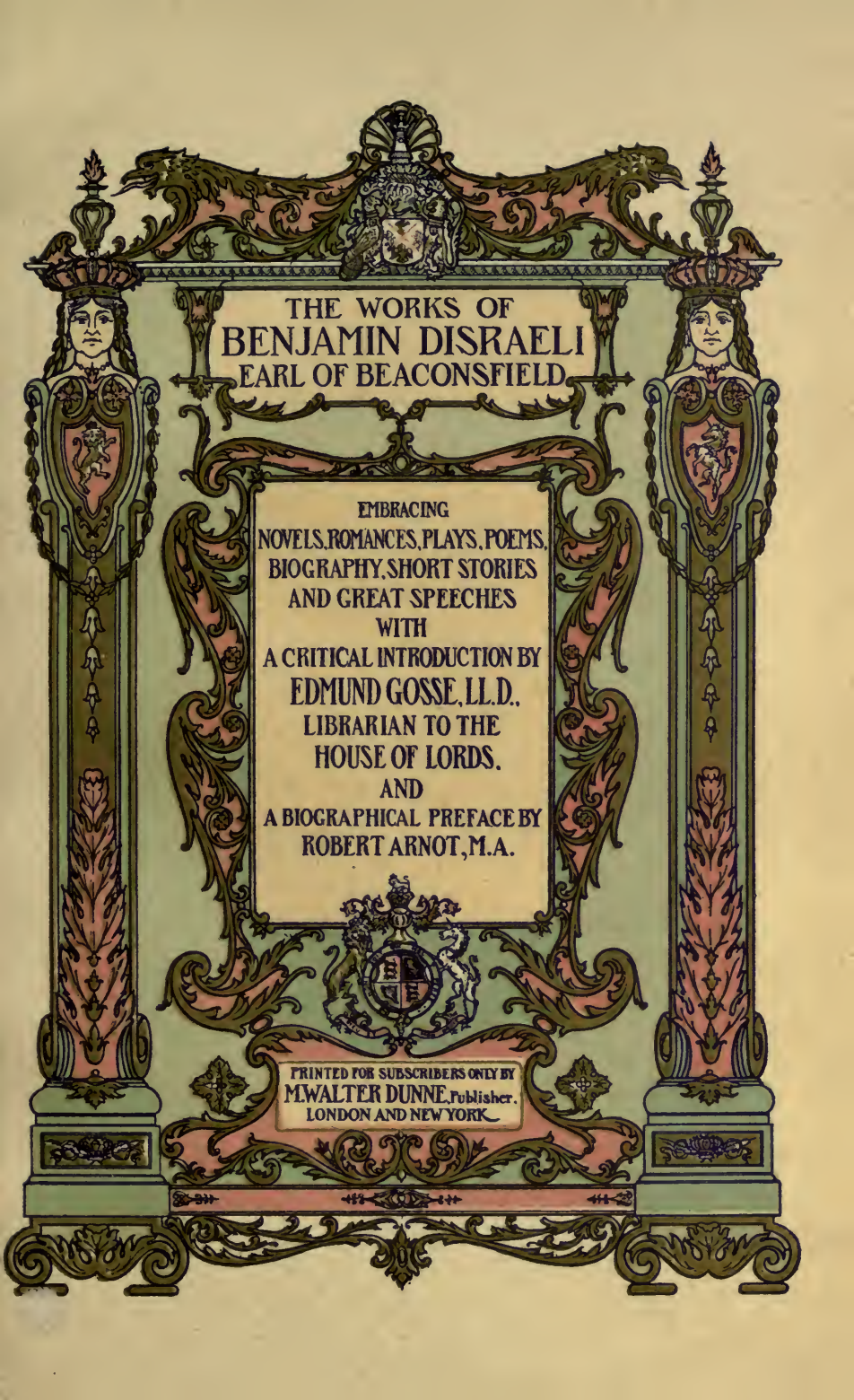
THE WORKS OF
BENJAMIN DISRAELI
EARL OF BEACONSFIELD
EMBRACING
NOVELS, ROMANCES, PLAYS, POEMS,
BIOGRAPHY, SHORT STORIES
AND GREAT SPEECHES
WITH
A CRITICAL INTRODUCTION BY
EDMUND GOSSE, LL.D.,
LIBRARIAN TO THE
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AND
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VENETIA

BY

BENJAMIN DISRAELI

EARL OF BEACONSFIELD

AFTER AN ORIGINAL DRAWING BY CLARE VICTOR DWIGGINS.

Suddenly the door burst open, and there stalked into the room a woman of eminent but most graceful stature.

(See page 55, *Venetia*.)

VOLUME II

M. WALTER DUNNE
NEW YORK and LONDON

VENETIA

BY

BENJAMIN DISRAELI
EARL OF BEACONSFIELD

VOLUME II.

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VENETIA

(*CONTINUED*)

CHAPTER LVII.

Cadurcis Leaves England For Ever.

IT HAS been well observed that no spectacle is so ridiculous as the British public in one of its periodical fits of morality. In general, elopements, divorces, and family quarrels pass with little notice. We read the scandal, talk about it for a day, and forget it. But, once in six or seven years, our virtue becomes outrageous. We cannot suffer the laws of religion and decency to be violated. We must make a stand against vice. We must teach libertines that the English people appreciate the importance of domestic ties. Accordingly, some unfortunate man, in no respect more depraved than hundreds whose offences have been treated with lenity, is singled out as an expiatory sacrifice. If he has children, they are to be taken from him. If he has a profession, he is to be driven from it. He is cut by the higher orders, and hissed by the lower. He is, in truth, a sort of whipping-

boy, by whose vicarious agonies all the other transgressors of the same class are, it is supposed, sufficiently chastised. We reflect very complacently on our own severity, and compare, with great pride, the high standard of morals established in England with the Parisian laxity. At length, our anger is satiated, our victim is ruined and heart-broken, and our virtue goes quietly to sleep for seven years more.

These observations of a celebrated writer apply to the instance of Lord Cadurcis; he was the periodical victim, the scapegoat of English morality, sent into the wilderness with all the crimes and curses of the multitude on his head. Lord Cadurcis had certainly committed a great crime: not his intrigue with Lady Monteagle, for that surely was not an unprecedented offence; not his duel with her husband, for after all it was a duel in self-defence; and, at all events, divorces and duels, under any circumstances, would scarcely have excited or authorised the storm which was now about to burst over the late spoiled child of society. But Lord Cadurcis had been guilty of the offence which, of all offences, is punished most severely: Lord Cadurcis had been overpraised. He had excited too warm an interest; and the public, with its usual justice, was resolved to chastise him for its own folly.

There are no fits of caprice so hasty and so violent as those of society. Society, indeed, is all passion and no heart. Cadurcis, in allusion to his sudden and singular success, had been in the habit of saying to his intimates, that he 'woke one morning and found himself famous.' He might now observe, 'I woke one morning and found myself infamous.' Before twenty-four hours had passed over his duel with Lord Monteagle,

he found himself branded by every journal in London as an unprincipled and unparalleled reprobate. The public, without waiting to think or even to inquire after the truth, instantly selected as genuine the most false and the most flagrant of the fifty libellous narratives that were circulated of the transaction. Stories, inconsistent with themselves, were all alike eagerly believed, and what evidence there might be for any one of them, the virtuous people, by whom they were repeated, neither cared nor knew. The public, in short, fell into a passion with their darling, and, ashamed of their past idolatry, nothing would satisfy them but knocking the divinity on the head.

Until Lord Monteagle, to the great regret of society, who really wished him to die in order that his antagonist might commit murder, was declared out of danger, Lord Cadurcis never quitted his house, and he was not a little surprised that scarcely a human being called upon him except his cousin, who immediately flew to his succour. George, indeed, would gladly have spared Cadurcis any knowledge of the storm that was raging against him, and which he flattered himself would blow over before Cadurcis was again abroad; but he was so much with his cousin, and Cadurcis was so extremely acute and naturally so suspicious, that this was impossible. Moreover, his absolute desertion by his friends, and the invectives and the lampoons with which the newspapers abounded, and of which he was the subject, rendered any concealment out of the question, and poor George passed his life in running about contradicting falsehoods, stating truth, fighting his cousin's battles, and then reporting to him, in the course of the day, the state of the campaign.

Cadurcis, being a man of infinite sensibility, suffered tortures. He had been so habituated to panegyric, that the slightest criticism ruffled him, and now his works had suddenly become the subject of universal and outrageous attack; having lived only in a cloud of incense, he suddenly found himself in a pillory of moral indignation; his writings, his habits, his temper, his person, were all alike ridiculed and vilified. In a word, Cadurcis, the petted, idolised, spoiled Cadurcis, was enduring that charming vicissitude in a prosperous existence, styled a reaction; and a conqueror, who deemed himself invincible, suddenly vanquished, could scarcely be more thunderstruck, or feel more impotently desperate.

The tortures of his mind, however, which this sudden change in his position and in the opinions of society, were of themselves competent to occasion to one of so impetuous and irritable a temperament, who ever magnified both misery and delight with all the creative power of a brooding imagination, and were excited in his case even to the liveliest agony, when he reminded himself of the situation in which he was now placed with Venetia. All hope of ever obtaining her hand had now certainly vanished, and he doubted whether even her love could survive the quick occurrence, after his ardent vows, of this degrading and mortifying catastrophe. He execrated Lady Monteagle with the most heart-felt rage, and when he remembered that all this time the world believed him the devoted admirer of this vixen, his brain was stimulated almost to the verge of insanity. His only hope of the truth reaching Venetia was through the medium of his cousin, and he impressed daily upon Captain Cadurcis the infinite consolation it would prove to

him if he could contrive to make her aware of the real facts of the case. According to the public voice, Lady Monteagle at his solicitation had fled to his house, and remained there, and her husband forced his entrance into the mansion in the middle of the night, while his wife escaped disguised in Lord Cadurcis' clothes. She did not, however, reach Monteagle House in time enough to escape detection by her lord, who had instantly sought and obtained satisfaction from his treacherous friend. All the monstrous inventions of the first week had now subsided into this circumstantial and undoubted narrative; at least this was the version believed by those who had been Cadurcis' friends. They circulated the authentic tale with the most considerate assiduity, and shook their heads, and said it was too bad, and that he must not be countenanced.

The moment Lord Monteagle was declared out of danger, Lord Cadurcis made his appearance in public. He walked into Brookes', and everybody seemed suddenly so deeply interested in the newspapers that you might have supposed they had brought intelligence of a great battle, or a revolution, or a change of ministry at the least. One or two men spoke to him, who had never presumed to address him at any other time, and he received a faint bow from a distinguished nobleman who had ever professed for him the greatest consideration and esteem.

Cadurcis mounted his horse and rode down to the House of Lords. There was a debate of some public interest, and a considerable crowd was collected round the Peers' entrance. The moment Lord Cadurcis was recognised, the multitude began hooting. He was agitated, and grinned a ghastly smile at the rabble.

But he dismounted, without further annoyance, and took his seat. Not a single peer of his own party spoke to him. The leader of the Opposition, indeed, bowed to him, and, in the course of the evening, he received, from one or two more of his party, some formal evidences of frigid courtesy. The tone of his reception by his friends could not be concealed from the ministerial party. It was soon detected, and generally whispered, that Lord Cadurcis was cut. Nevertheless, he sat out the debate and voted. The house broke up. He felt lonely; his old friend, the Bishop of ——, who had observed all that had occurred, and who might easily have avoided him, came forward, however, in the most marked manner, and, in a tone which everybody heard, said, 'How do you do, Lord Cadurcis? I am very glad to see you,' shaking his hand most cordially. This made a great impression. Several of the Tory Lords, among them Venetia's uncle, now advanced and saluted him. He received their advances with a haughty, but not disdainful, courtesy; but when his Whig friends, confused, now hurried to encumber him with their assistance, he treated them with the scorn which they well deserved.

'Will you take a seat in my carriage home, Lord Cadurcis?' said his leader, for it was notorious that Cadurcis had been mobbed on his arrival.

'Thank you, my lord,' said Cadurcis, speaking very audibly, 'I prefer returning as I came. We are really both of us such unpopular personages that your kindness would scarcely be prudent.'

The house had been full; there was a great scuffle and confusion as the peers were departing; the mob, now considerable, were prepared for the appearance of Lord Cadurcis, and their demeanour was menacing.

Some shouted out his name; then it was repeated with odious and vindictive epithets, followed by ferocious yells. A great many peers collected round Cadurcis, and entreated him not to return on horseback. It must be confessed that genuine and considerable feeling was now shown by all men of all parties. And, indeed, to witness this young, and noble, and gifted creature, but a few days back the idol of the nation, from whom a word, a glance even, was deemed the greatest and most gratifying distinction, whom all orders, classes, and conditions of men had combined to stimulate with multiplied adulation, with all the glory and ravishing delights of the world, as it were, forced upon him,—to see him thus assailed with the savage execrations of all those vile things who exult in the fall of everything that is great, and the abasement of everything that is noble, was indeed a spectacle which might have silenced malice and satisfied envy!

'My carriage is most heartily at your service, Lord Cadurcis,' said the noble leader of the government in the upper house; 'you can enter it without the slightest suspicion by these ruffians.' 'Lord Cadurcis; my dear lord; my good lord, for our sakes, if not for your own; Cadurcis, dear Cadurcis, my good Cadurcis, it is madness, folly, insanity; a mob will do anything, and an English mob is viler than all; for Heaven's sake!' Such were a few of the varied exclamations which resounded on all sides, but which produced on the person to whom they were addressed only the result of his desiring the attendant to call for his horses.

The lobby was yet full; it was a fine thing in the light of the archway to see Cadurcis spring into his

saddle. Instantly there was a horrible yell. Yet in spite of all their menaces, the mob were for a time awed by his courage; they made way for him; he might even have ridden quickly on for some few yards, but he would not; he reined his fiery steed into a slow but stately pace, and, with a countenance scornful and composed, he continued his progress, apparently unconscious of impediment. Meanwhile, the hooting continued without abatement, increasing indeed, after the first comparative pause, in violence and menace. At length a bolder ruffian, excited by the uproar, rushed forward and seized Cadurcis' bridle. Cadurcis struck the man over the eyes with his whip, and at the same time touched his horse with his spur, and the assailant was dashed to the ground. This seemed a signal for a general assault. It commenced with hideous yells. His friends at the House, who had watched everything with the keenest interest, immediately directed all the constables who were at hand to rush to his succour; hitherto they had restrained the police, lest their interference might stimulate rather than repress the mob. The charge of the constables was well timed; they laid about them with their staves; you might have heard the echo of many a broken crown. Nevertheless, though they dispersed the mass, they could not penetrate the immediate barrier that surrounded Lord Cadurcis, whose only defence indeed, for they had cut off his groom, was the terrors of his horse's heels, whose managed motions he regulated with admirable skill, now rearing, now prancing, now kicking behind, and now turning round with a quick yet sweeping motion, before which the mob retreated. Off his horse, however, they seemed resolved to drag him; and it was not

difficult to conceive, if they succeeded, what must be his eventual fate. They were infuriate, but his contact with his assailants fortunately prevented their comates from hurling stones at him from the fear of endangering their own friends.

A messenger to the Horse Guards had been sent from the House of Lords; but, before the military could arrive, and fortunately (for, with their utmost expedition, they must have been too late), a rumour of the attack got current in the House of Commons. Captain Cadurcis, Lord Scrope, and a few other young men instantly rushed out; and, ascertaining the truth, armed with good cudgels and such other effective weapons as they could instantly obtain, they mounted their horses and charged the nearly-triumphant populace, dealing such vigorous blows that their efforts soon made a visible diversion in Lord Cadurcis' favour. It is difficult, indeed, to convey an idea of the exertions and achievements of Captain Cadurcis; no Paladin of chivalry ever executed such marvels on a swarm of Paynim slaves; and many a bloody coxcomb and broken limb bore witness in Petty France that night to his achievements. Still the mob struggled and were not daunted by the delay in immolating their victim. As long as they had only to fight against men in plain clothes, they were valorous and obstinate enough; but the moment that the crests of a troop of Horse Guards were seen trotting down Parliament Street, everybody ran away, and in a few minutes all Palace-yard was as still as if the genius of the place rendered a riot impossible.

Lord Cadurcis thanked his friends, who were profuse in their compliments to his pluck. His manner, usually playful with his inmates of his own standing,

was, however, rather grave at present, though very cordial. He asked them home to dine with him; but they were obliged to decline his invitation, as a division was expected; so, saying 'Good-bye, George, perhaps I shall see you to-night,' Cadurcis rode rapidly off.

With Cadurcis there was but one step from the most exquisite sensitiveness to the most violent defiance. The experience of this day had entirely cured him of his previous nervous deference to the feelings of society. Society had outraged him, and now he resolved to outrage society. He owed society nothing; his reception at the House of Lords and the riot in Palace-yard had alike cleared his accounts with all orders of men, from the highest to the lowest. He had experienced, indeed, some kindness that he could not forget, but only from his own kin, and those who with his associations were the same as kin. His memory dwelt with gratification on his cousin's courageous zeal, and still more on the demonstration which Masham had made in his favour, which, if possible, argued still greater boldness and sincere regard. That was a trial of true affection, and an instance of moral courage, which Cadurcis honoured, and which he never could forget. He was anxious about Venetia; he wished to stand as well with her as he deserved, no better; but he was grieved to think she could believe all those infamous tales at present current respecting himself. But for the rest of the world, he delivered them all to the most absolute contempt, disgust, and execration; he resolved, from this time, nothing should ever induce him again to enter society, or admit the advances of a single civilised ruffian who affected to be social. The country, the

people, their habits, laws, manners, customs, opinions, and everything connected with them, were viewed with the same jaundiced eye; and his only object now was to quit England, to which he resolved never to return.

CHAPTER LVIII.

A Volume of Verse.

ENETIA was, perhaps, not quite so surprised as the rest of her friends, when, on their return to Richmond, Lord Cadurcis was not again seen. She was very unhappy: she recalled the scene in the garden at Cherbury some years back; and, with the knowledge of the impetuosity of his temper, she believed she should never see him again. Poor Plantagenet, who loved her so much, and whose love she so fully returned! why might they not be happy? She neither doubted the constancy of his affection, nor their permanent felicity if they were united. She shared none of her mother's apprehensions or her prejudices, but she was the victim of duty and her vow. In the course of four-and-twenty hours, strange rumours were afloat respecting Lord Cadurcis; and the newspapers on the ensuing morning told the truth, and more than the truth. Venetia could not doubt as to the duel or the elopement; but, instead of feeling indignation, she attributed what had occurred to the desperation of his mortified mind; and she visited on herself all the fatal consequences that had happened.

At present, however, all her emotions were quickly absorbed in the one terrible fear that Lord Monteagle would die. In that dreadful and urgent apprehension every other sentiment merged. It was impossible to conceal her misery, and she entreated her mother to return to town.

Very differently, however, was the catastrophe viewed by Lady Annabel. She, on the contrary, triumphed in her sagacity and her prudence. She hourly congratulated herself on being the saviour of her daughter; and though she refrained from indulging in any open exultation over Venetia's escape and her own profound discretion, it was, nevertheless, impossible for her to conceal from her daughter her infinite satisfaction and self-congratulation. While Venetia was half broken-hearted, her mother silently returned thanks to Providence for the merciful dispensation which had exempted her child from so much misery.

The day after their return to town, Captain Cadurcis called upon them. Lady Annabel never mentioned the name of his cousin; but George, finding no opportunity of conversing with Venetia alone, and being, indeed, too much excited to speak on any other subject, plunged at once into the full narrative; defended Lord Cadurcis, abused the Monteagles and the slanderous world, and, in spite of Lady Annabel's ill-concealed dissatisfaction, favoured her with an exact and circumstantial account of everything that had happened, how it happened, when it happened, and where it happened; concluding by a declaration that Cadurcis was the best fellow that ever lived; the most unfortunate, and the most ill-used; and that, if he were to be hunted down for an affair like this, over which he had no control, there was not a man in

London who could be safe for ten minutes. All that George effected by his zeal was to convince Lady Annabel that his cousin had entirely corrupted him; she looked upon her former favourite as another victim; but Venetia listened in silence, and not without solace.

Two or three days after the riot at the House of Lords, Captain Cadurcis burst into his cousin's room with a triumphant countenance. 'Well, Plantagenet!' he exclaimed, 'I have done it: I have seen her alone, and I have put you as right as possible. Nothing can be better.'

'Tell me, my dear fellow,' said Lord Cadurcis, eagerly.

'Well, you know, I have called half-a-dozen times,' said George, 'but either Lady Annabel was there, or they were not at home, or something always occurred to prevent any private communication. But I met her to-day with her aunt; I joined them immediately, and kept with them the whole morning. I am sorry to say she, I mean Venetia, is devilish ill; she is, indeed. However, her aunt now is quite on your side, and very kind, I can tell you that. I put her right at first, and she has fought our battle bravely. Well, they stopped to call somewhere, and Venetia was so unwell that she would not get out, and I was left alone in the carriage with her. Time was precious, and I opened at once. I told her how wretched you were, and that the only thing that made you miserable was about her, because you were afraid she would think you so profligate, and all that. I went through it all; told her the exact truth, which, indeed, she had before heard; but now I assured her, on my honour, that it was exactly what happened; and she

said she did not doubt it, and could not, from some conversation which you had together the day we were all at Hampton Court, and that she felt that nothing could have been premeditated, and fully believed that everything had occurred as I said; and, however she deplored it, she felt the same for you as ever, and prayed for your happiness. Then she told me what misery the danger of Lord Monteagle had occasioned her; that she thought his death must have been the forerunner of her own; but the moment he was declared out of danger seemed the happiest hour of her life. I told her you were going to leave England, and asked her whether she had any message for you; and she said, "Tell him he is the same to me that he has always been." So, when her aunt returned, I jumped out and ran on to you at once.'

'You are the best fellow that ever lived, George,' said Lord Cadurcis; 'and now the world may go to the devil!'

This message from Venetia acted upon Lord Cadurcis like a charm. It instantly cleared his mind. He shut himself up in his house for a week, and wrote a farewell to England, perhaps the most masterly effusion of his powerful spirit. It abounded in passages of overwhelming passion, and almost Satanic sarcasm. Its composition entirely relieved his long-brooding brain. It contained, moreover, a veiled address to Venetia, delicate, tender, and irresistibly affecting. He appended also to the publication the verses he had previously addressed to her.

This volume, which was purchased with an avidity exceeding even the eagerness with which his former productions had been received, exercised extraordinary

influence on public opinion. It enlisted the feelings of the nation on his side in a struggle with a coterie. It was suddenly discovered that Lord Cadurcis was the most injured of mortals, and far more interesting than ever. The address to the unknown object of his adoration, and the verses to Venetia, mystified everybody. Lady Monteagle was universally abused, and all sympathised with the long-treasured and baffled affection of the unhappy poet. Cadurcis, however, was not to be conciliated. He left his native shores in a blaze of glory, but with the accents of scorn still quivering on his lip.

CHAPTER LIX.

In Switzerland.

HE still waters of the broad and winding lake reflected the lustre of the cloudless sky. The gentle declinations of the green hills that immediately bordered the lake, with an undulating margin that now retired into bays of the most picturesque form, now jutted forth into woody promontories, and then opened into valleys of sequestered beauty, which the eye delighted to pursue, were studded with white villas, and cottages scarcely less graceful, and occasionally with villages, and even towns; here and there rose a solitary chapel; and, scarcely less conspicuous, the black spire of some cypress strikingly contrasting with the fair buildings or the radiant foliage that in general surrounded them. A rampart of azure mountains raised their huge forms behind the nearer hills; and occasionally peering over these, like spectres on some brilliant festival, were the ghastly visages of the Alpine glaciers.

It was within an hour of sunset, and the long shadows had fallen upon the waters: a broad boat, with a variegated awning, rowed by two men, approached the steps of a marble terrace. The moment

they had reached their point of destination, and had fastened the boat to its moorings, the men landed their oars, and immediately commenced singing a simple yet touching melody, wherewith it was their custom to apprise their employers of their arrival.

'Will they come forth this evening, think you, Vittorio?' said one boatman to the other.

'By our holy mother, I hope so!' replied his comrade, 'for this light air that is now rising will do the young signora more good than fifty doctors.'

'They are good people,' said Vittorio. 'It gives me more pleasure to row them than any persons who ever hired us.'

'Ay, ay!' said his comrade, 'it was a lucky day when we first put an oar in the lake for them, heretics though they be.'

'But they may be converted yet,' said his companion; 'for, as I was saying to Father Francisco last night, if the young signora dies it is a sad thing to think what will become of her.'

'And what said the good Father?'

'He shook his head,' said Vittorio.

'When Father Francisco shakes his head, he means a great deal,' said his companion.

At this moment a servant appeared on the terrace, to say the ladies were at hand; and very shortly afterwards Lady Annabel Herbert, with her daughter leaning on her arm, descended the steps and entered the boat. The countenances of the boatmen brightened when they saw them, and they both made their inquiries after the health of Venetia with tenderness and feeling.

'Indeed, my good friends,' said Venetia, 'I think you are right, and the lake will cure me, after all.'

'The blessing of the lake be upon you, signora,' said the boatmen, crossing themselves.

Just as they were moving off, came running Mistress Pauncefort, quite breathless. 'Miss Herbert's fur cloak, my lady; you told me to remember, my lady, and I cannot think how I forgot it. But I really have been so very hot all day, that such a thing as furs never entered my head. And for my part, until I travelled, I always thought furs were only worn in Russia. But live and learn, as I say.'

They were now fairly floating on the calm, clear waters, and the rising breeze was as grateful to Venetia as the boatmen had imagined.

A return of those symptoms which had before disquieted Lady Annabel for her daughter, and which were formerly the cause of their residence at Weymouth, had induced her, in compliance with the advice of her physicians, to visit Italy; but the fatigue of travel had exhausted the energies of Venetia (for in those days the Alps were not passed in luxurious travelling carriages) on the very threshold of the promised land; and Lady Annabel had been prevailed upon to take a villa on the Lago Maggiore, where Venetia had passed two months, still suffering indeed from great debility, but not without advantage.

There are few spots more favoured by nature than the Italian lakes and their vicinity, combining, as they do, the most sublime features of mountainous scenery with all the softer beauties and the varied luxuriance of the plain. As the still, bright lake is to the rushing and troubled cataract, is Italy to Switzerland and Savoy. Emerging from the chaotic ravines and the wild gorges of the Alps, the happy land breaks upon us like a beautiful vision. We revel in the sunny

light, after the unearthly glare of eternal snow. Our sight seems renovated as we throw our eager glance over those golden plains, clothed with such picturesque trees, sparkling with such graceful villages, watered by such noble rivers, and crowned with such magnificent cities; and all bathed and beaming in an atmosphere so soft and radiant! Every isolated object charms us with its beautiful novelty: for the first time we gaze on palaces; the garden, the terrace, and the statue, recall our dreams beneath a colder sky; and we turn from these to catch the hallowed form of some cupolaed convent, crowning the gentle elevation of some green hill, and flanked by the cypress or the pine.

The influence of all these delightful objects and of this benign atmosphere on the frame and mind of Venetia had been considerable. After the excitement of the last year of her life, and the harassing and agitating scenes with which it closed, she found a fine solace in this fair land and this soft sky, which the sad perhaps can alone experience. Its repose alone afforded a consolatory contrast to the turbulent pleasure of the great world. She looked back upon those glittering and noisy scenes with an aversion which was only modified by her self-congratulation at her escape from their exhausting and contaminating sphere. Here she recurred, but with all the advantages of a change of scene, and a scene so rich in novel and interesting associations, to the calm tenor of those days, when not a thought ever seemed to escape from Cherbury and its spell-bound seclusion. Her books, her drawings, her easel, and her harp, were now again her chief pursuits; pursuits, however, influenced by the genius of the land in which she lived, and therefore invested with a novel interest;

for the literature and the history of the country naturally attracted her attention; and its fair aspects and sweet sounds alike inspired her pencil and her voice. She had, in the society of her mother, indeed, the advantage of communing with a mind not less refined and cultivated than her own. Lady Annabel was a companion whose conversation, from reading and reflection, was eminently suggestive; and their hours, though they lived in solitude, never hung heavy. They were always employed, and always cheerful. But Venetia was not more than cheerful. Still very young, and gifted with an imaginative and therefore sanguine mind, the course of circumstances, however, had checked her native spirit, and shaded a brow which, at her time of life and with her temperament, should have been rather fanciful than pensive. If Venetia, supported by the disciplined energies of a strong mind, had schooled herself into not looking back to the past with grief, her future was certainly not tinged with the Iris pencil of Hope. It seemed to her that it was her fate that life should bring her no happier hours than those she now enjoyed. They did not amount to exquisite bliss. That was a conviction which, by no process of reflection, however ingenious, could she delude herself to credit. Venetia struggled to take refuge in content, a mood of mind perhaps less natural than it should be to one so young, so gifted, and so fair!

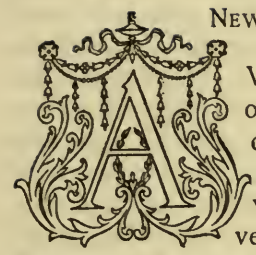
Their villa was surrounded by a garden in the ornate and artificial style of the country. A marble terrace overlooked the lake, crowned with many a statue, and vases that held the aloe. The laurel and the cactus, the cypress and the pine, filled the air with their fragrance, or charmed the eye with their

rarity and beauty: the walks were festooned with the vine, and they could raise their hands and pluck the glowing fruit which screened them from the beam by which it was ripened. In this enchanted domain Venetia might be often seen, a form even fairer than the sculptured nymphs among which she glided, catching the gentle breeze that played upon the surface of the lake, or watching the white sail that glittered in the sun as it floated over its purple bosom.

Yet this beautiful retreat Venetia was soon to quit, and she thought of her departure with a sigh. Her mother had been warned to avoid the neighbourhood of the mountains in the winter, and the autumn was approaching its close. If Venetia could endure the passage of the Apennines, it was the intention of Lady Annabel to pass the winter on the coast of the Mediterranean; otherwise to settle in one of the Lombard cities. At all events, in the course of a few weeks they were to quit their villa on the lake.

CHAPTER LX.

News from Cadurcis.



VERY few days after this excursion on the lake, Lady Annabel and her daughter were both surprised and pleased with a visit from a friend whose appearance was certainly very unexpected; this was Captain Cadurcis. On his way from Switzerland to Sicily, he had heard of their residence in the neighbourhood, and had crossed over from Arona to visit them.

The name of Cadurcis was still dear to Venetia, and George had displayed such gallantry and devotion in all his cousin's troubles that she was personally attached to him; he had always been a favourite of her mother; his arrival, therefore, was welcomed by each of the ladies with great cordiality. He accepted the hospitality which Lady Annabel offered him, and remained with them a week, a period which they spent in visiting the most beautiful and interesting spots of the lake, with which they were already sufficiently familiar to allow them to prove guides as able as they were agreeable. These excursions, indeed, contributed to the pleasure and happiness of the whole party. There was about Captain Cadurcis

a natural cheerfulness which animated every one in his society; a gay simplicity, difficult to define, but very charming, and which, without effort, often produced deeper impressions than more brilliant and subtle qualities. Left alone in the world, and without a single advantage save those that nature had conferred upon him, it had often been remarked, that in whatever circle he moved George Cadurcis always became the favourite and everywhere made friends. His sweet and engaging temper had perhaps as much contributed to his professional success as his distinguished gallantry and skill. Other officers, no doubt, were as brave and able as Captain Cadurcis, but his commanders always signalled him out for favourable notice; and, strange to say, his success, instead of exciting envy and ill-will, pleased even his less fortunate competitors. However hard another might feel his own lot, it was soothed by the reflection that George Cadurcis was at least more fortunate. His popularity, however, was not confined to his profession. His cousin's noble guardian, whom George had never seen until he ventured to call upon his lordship on his return to England, now looked upon him almost as a son, and omitted no opportunity of advancing his interests in the world. Of all the members of the House of Commons he was perhaps the only one that everybody praised, and his success in the world of fashion had been as remarkable as in his profession. These great revolutions in his life and future prospects had, however, not produced the slightest change in his mind and manners; and this was perhaps the secret spell of his prosperity. Though we are most of us the creatures of affectation, simplicity has a great charm, especially when attended,

as in the present instance, with many agreeable and some noble qualities. In spite of the rough fortunes of his youth, the breeding of Captain Cadurcis was high; the recollection of the race to which he belonged had never been forgotten by him. He was proud of his family. He had one of those light hearts, too, which enable their possessors to acquire accomplishments with facility: he had a sweet voice, a quick ear, a rapid eye. He acquired a language as some men learn an air. Then his temper was imperturbable, and although the most obliging and kindest-hearted creature that ever lived, there was a native dignity about him which prevented his good-nature from being abused. No sense of interest, either, could ever induce him to act contrary to the dictates of his judgment and his heart. At the risk of offending his patron, George sided with his cousin, although he had deeply offended his guardian, and although the whole world was against him. Indeed, the strong affection that Lord Cadurcis instantly entertained for George is not the least remarkable instance of the singular, though silent, influence that Captain Cadurcis everywhere acquired. Lord Cadurcis had fixed upon him for his friend from the first moment of their acquaintance; and though apparently there could not be two characters more dissimilar, there were at bottom some striking points of sympathy and some strong bonds of union, in the generosity and courage that distinguished both, and in the mutual blood that filled their veins.

There seemed to be a tacit understanding between the several members of our party that the name of Lord Cadurcis was not to be mentioned. Lady Annabel made no inquiry after him; Venetia was unwilling

to hazard a question which would annoy her mother, and of which the answer could not bring her much satisfaction; and Captain Cadurcis did not think fit himself to originate any conversation on the subject. Nevertheless, Venetia could not help sometimes fancying, when her eyes met his, that their mutual thoughts were the same, and both dwelling on one who was absent, and of whom her companion would willingly have conversed. To confess the truth, indeed, George Cadurcis was on his way to join his cousin, who had crossed over from Spain to Barbary, and journeyed along the African coast from Tangiers to Tripoli. Their point of reunion was to be Sicily or Malta. Hearing of the residence of the Herberts on the lake, he thought it would be but kind to Plantagenet to visit them, and perhaps to bear to him some message from Venetia. There was nothing, indeed, on which Captain Cadurcis was more intent than to effect the union between his cousin and Miss Herbert. He was deeply impressed with the sincerity of Plantagenet's passion, and he himself entertained for the lady the greatest affection and admiration. He thought she was the only person whom he had ever known who was really worthy to be his cousin's bride. And, independent of her personal charms and undoubted talents, she had displayed during the outcry against Lord Cadurcis so much good sense, such a fine spirit, and such modest yet sincere affection for the victim, that George Cadurcis had almost lost his own heart to her, when he was endeavouring to induce her not utterly to reject that of another; and it became one of the dreams of his life, that in a little time, when all, as he fondly anticipated, had ended as it should, and as he wished it, he should be able to find an occa-

sional home at Cadurcis Abbey, and enjoy the charming society of one whom he had already taught himself to consider as a sister.

'And to-night you must indeed go?' said Venetia, as they were walking together on the terrace. It was the only time that they had been alone together during his visit.

'I must start from Arona at daybreak,' replied George; 'and I must travel quickly, for in less than a month I must be in Sicily.'

'Sicily! Why are you going to Sicily?'

Captain Cadurcis smiled. 'I am going to join a friend of ours,' he answered.

'Plantagenet?' she said.

Captain Cadurcis nodded assent.

'Poor Plantagenet!' said Venetia.

'His name has been on my lips several times,' said George.

'I am sure of that,' said Venetia. 'Is he well?'

'He writes to me in fair spirits,' said Captain Cadurcis. 'He has been travelling in Spain, and now he is somewhere in Africa; we are to meet in Sicily or Malta. I think travel has greatly benefited him. He seems quite delighted with his glimpse of Oriental manners, and I should scarcely be surprised if he were now to stretch on to Constantinople.'

'I wonder if he will ever return to England,' said Venetia, thoughtfully.

'There is only one event that would induce him,' said Captain Cadurcis. And then after a pause he added, 'You will not ask me what it is?'

'I wish he were in England, and were happy,' said Venetia.

'It is in your power to effect both results,' said her companion.

'It is useless to recur to that subject,' said Venetia. 'Plantagenet knows my feelings towards him, but fate has forbidden our destinies to be combined.'

'Then he will never return to England, and never be happy. Ah, Venetia! what shall I tell him when we meet? What message am I to bear him from you?'

'Those regards which he ever possessed, and has never forfeited,' said Venetia.

'Poor Cadurcis!' said his cousin, shaking his head, 'if any man ever had reason to be miserable, it is he.'

'We are none of us very happy, I think,' said Venetia, mournfully. 'I am sure when I look back to the last few years of my life it seems to me that there is some curse hanging over our families. I cannot penetrate it; it baffles me.'

'I am sure,' said Captain Cadurcis with great animation, 'nay, I would pledge my existence cheerfully on the venture, that if Lady Annabel would only relent towards Cadurcis, we should all be the happiest people in the world.'

'Heigho!' said Venetia. 'There are other cares in our house besides our unfortunate acquaintance with your cousin. We were the last people in the world with whom he should ever have become connected.'

'And yet it was an intimacy that commenced auspiciously,' said her friend. 'I am sure I have sat with Cadurcis, and listened to him by the hour, while he has told me of all the happy days at Cherbury when you were both children; the only happy days, according to him, that he ever knew.'

'Yes! they were happy days,' said Venetia.

'And what connection could have offered a more rational basis for felicity than your union?' he continued. 'Whatever the world may think, I, who know Cadurcis to the very bottom of his heart, feel assured that you never would have repented for an instant becoming the sharer of his life; your families were of equal rank, your estates joined, he felt for your mother the affection of a son. There seemed every element that could have contributed to earthly bliss. As for his late career, you who know all have already, have always indeed, viewed it with charity. Placed in his position, who could have acted otherwise? I know very well that his genius, which might recommend him to another woman, is viewed by your mother with more than apprehension. It is true that a man of his exquisite sensibility requires sympathies as refined to command his nature. It is no common mind that could maintain its hold over Cadurcis, and his spirit could not yield but to rare and transcendent qualities. He found them, Venetia, he found them in her whom he had known longest and most intimately, and loved from his boyhood. Talk of constancy, indeed! who has been so constant as my cousin? No, Venetia! you may think fit to bow to the feelings of your mother, and it would be impertinence in me to doubt for an instant the propriety of your conduct: I do not doubt it; I admire it; I admire you, and everything you have done; none can view your behaviour throughout all these painful transactions with more admiration, I might even say with more reverence, than myself; but, Venetia, you never can persuade me, you have never attempted to persuade me, that you yourself are

incredulous of the strength and permanency of my cousin's love.'

'Ah, George ! you are our friend !' said Venetia, a tear stealing down her cheek. 'But, indeed, we must not talk of these things. As for myself, I think not of happiness. I am certain I am not born to be happy. I wish only to live calmly ; contentedly, I would say ; but that, perhaps, is too much. My feelings have been so harrowed, my mind so harassed, during these last few years, and so many causes of pain and misery seem ever hovering round my existence, that I do assure you, my dear friend, I have grown old before my time. Ah! you may smile, George, but my heart is heavy; it is indeed.'

'I wish I could lighten it,' said Captain Cadurcis. 'I fear I am somewhat selfish in wishing you to marry my cousin, for then you know I should have a permanent and authentic claim to your regard. But no one, at least I think so, can feel more deeply interested in your welfare than I do. I never knew any one like you, and I always tell Cadurcis so, and that I think makes him worse, but I cannot help it.'

Venetia could not refrain from smiling at the simplicity of this confession.

'Well,' continued her companion, 'everything, after all, is for the best. You and Plantagenet are both very young; I live in hopes that I shall yet see you Lady Cadurcis.'

Venetia shook her head, but was not sorry that their somewhat melancholy conversation should end in a livelier vein. So they entered the villa.

The hour of parting was painful, and the natural gaiety of Captain Cadurcis deserted him. He had become greatly attached to the Herberts. Without any

female relatives of his own, their former intimacy and probable connection with his cousin had taught him to look upon them in some degree in the light of kindred. He had originally indeed become acquainted with them in all the blaze of London society, not very calculated to bring out the softer tints and more subdued tones of our character, but even then the dignified grace of Lady Annabel and the radiant beauty of Venetia, had captivated him, and he had cultivated their society with assiduity and extreme pleasure. The grand crisis of his cousin's fortunes had enabled him to become intimate with the more secret and serious qualities of Venetia, and from that moment he had taken the deepest interest in everything connected with her. His happy and unexpected meeting in Italy had completed the spell; and now that he was about to leave them, uncertain even if they should ever méet again, his soft heart trembled, and he could scarcely refrain from tears as he pressed their hands, and bade them his sincere adieus.

The moon had risen ere he entered his boat, and flung a rippling line of glittering light on the bosom of the lake. The sky was without a cloud, save a few thin fleecy vapours that hovered over the azure brow of a distant mountain. The shores of the lake were suffused with the serene effulgence, and every object was so distinct, that the eye was pained by the lights of the villages, that every instant became more numerous and vivid. The bell of a small chapel on the opposite shore, and the distant chant of some fishermen still working at their nets, were the only sounds that broke the silence which they did not disturb. Reclined in his boat, George Cadurcis watched the vanishing villa of the Herberts, until the light in the

principal chamber was the only sign that assured him of its site. That chamber held Venetia, the unhappy Venetia! He covered his face with his hand when even the light of her chamber vanished, and, full of thoughts tender and disconsolate, he at length arrived at Arona.

CHAPTER LXI.

The House of Petrarch.

PURSUANT to their plans, the Herberts left the Lago Maggiore towards the end of October, and proceeded by gentle journeys to the Apennines. Before they crossed this barrier, they were to rest awhile in one of the Lombard cities; and now they were on the point of reaching Arquâ, which Venetia had expressed a strong desire to visit.

At the latter part of the last century, the race of tourists, the offspring of a long peace, and the rapid fortunes made during the war, did not exist. Travelling was then confined to the aristocracy, and though the English, when opportunity offered, have ever been a restless people, the gentle bosom of the Euganean Hills was then rarely disturbed amid its green and sequestered valleys.

There is not perhaps in all the Italian region, fertile as it is in interesting associations and picturesque beauty, a spot that tradition and nature have so completely combined to hallow, as the last residence of Petrarch. It seems, indeed, to have been formed for the retirement of a pensive and poetic spirit. It re-

cedes from the world by a succession of delicate acclivities clothed with vineyards and orchards, until winding within these hills, the mountain hamlet is at length discovered, enclosed by two ridges that slope towards each other, and seem to shut out all the passions of a troubled race. The houses are scattered at intervals on the steep sides of these summits, and on a little knoll is the mansion of the poet, built by himself, and commanding a rich and extensive view, that ends only with the shores of the Adriatic sea. His tomb, a sarcophagus of red marble, supported by pillars, doubtless familiar to the reader, is at hand; and, placed on an elevated site, gives a solemn impression to a scene of which the character would otherwise be serenely cheerful.

Our travellers were surprised to find that the house of the poet was inhabited by a very different tenant to the rustic occupier they had anticipated. They heard that a German gentleman had within the last year fixed upon it as the residence of himself and his wife. The peasants were profuse in their panegyrics of this visitor, whose arrival had proved quite an era in the history of their village. According to them, a kinder and more charitable gentleman never breathed; his whole life was spent in studying and contributing to the happiness of those around him. The sick, the sorrowful, and the needy were ever sure of finding a friend in him, and merit a generous patron. From him came portions to the portionless; no village maiden need despair of being united to her betrothed, while he could assist her; and at his own cost he had sent to the academy of Bologna a youth whom his father would have made a cowherd, but whom nature predisposed to be a painter. The inhabitants

believed this benevolent and generous person was a physician, for he attended the sick, prescribed for their complaints, and had once even performed an operation with great success. It seemed that, since Petrarch, no one had ever been so popular at Arquâ as this kind German. Lady Annabel and Venetia were interested with the animated narratives of the ever-active beneficence of this good man, and Lady Annabel especially regretted that his absence deprived her of the gratification of becoming acquainted with a character so rare and so invaluable. In the meantime they availed themselves of the offer of his servants to view the house of Petrarch, for their master had left orders that his absence should never deprive a pilgrim from paying his homage to the shrine of genius.

The house, consisting of two floors, had recently been repaired by the present occupier. It was simply furnished. The ground-floor was allotted to the servants. The upper story contained five rooms, three of which were of good size, and two closets. In one of these were the traditionary chair and table of Petrarch, and here, according to their guides, the master of the house passed a great portion of his time in study, to which, by their account, he seemed devoted. The adjoining chamber was his library; its windows opened on a balcony looking on two lofty and conical hills, one topped with a convent, while the valley opened on the side and spread into a calm and very pleasant view. Of the other apartments, one served as a saloon, but there was nothing in it remarkable, except an admirably painted portrait of a beautiful woman, who the servant informed them was their mistress.

'But that surely is not a German physiognomy?' said Lady Annabel.

'The mistress is an Italian,' replied the servant.

'She is very handsome, of whatever nation she may be,' replied Lady Annabel.

'Oh! how I should have liked to meet these happy people, mamma,' said Venetia, 'for happy they surely must be.'

'They seem to be good people,' said Lady Annabel. 'It really lightened my heart to hear of all this gentleman's kind deeds.'

'Ah! if the signora only knew the master,' said their guide, 'she would indeed know a good man.'

They descended to the garden, which certainly was not like the garden of their villa; it had been but lately a wilderness of laurels, but there were evidences that the eye and hand of taste were commencing its restoration with effect.

'The master did this,' said their guide. 'He will allow no one to work in the garden but himself. It is a week since he went to Bologna, to see our Paulo. He gained a prize at the academy, and his father begged the master to be present when it was conferred on him; he said it would do his son so much good! So the master went, though it is the only time he has quitted Quâ since he came to reside here.'

'And how long has he resided here?' inquired Venetia.

''Tis the second autumn,' said the guide, 'and he came in the spring. If the signora would only wait, we expect the master home to-night or to-morrow, and he would be glad to see her.'

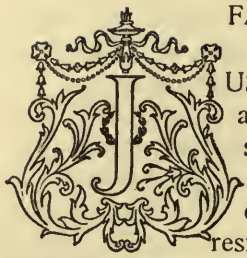
'We cannot wait, my friend,' said Lady Annabel,

rewarding the guide; 'but you will thank your master in our names, for the kindness we have experienced. You are all happy in such a friend.'

'I must write my name in Petrarch's house,' said Venetia. 'Adieu, happy Arquâ! Adieu, happy dwellers in this happy valley!'

CHAPTER LXII.

Father and Child.



UST as Lady Annabel and her daughter arrived at Rovigo, one of those sudden and violent storms that occasionally occur at the termination of an Italian autumn raged with irresistible fury. The wind roared with a noise that overpowered the thunder; then came a rattling shower of hail, with stones as big as pigeons' eggs, succeeded by rain, not in showers, but literally in cataracts. The only thing to which a tempest of rain in Italy can be compared is the bursting of a waterspout. Venetia could scarcely believe that this could be the same day of which the golden morning had found her among the sunny hills of Arquâ. This unexpected vicissitude induced Lady Annabel to alter her plans, and she resolved to rest at Rovigo, where she was glad to find that they could be sheltered in a commodious inn.

The building had originally been a palace, and in its halls and galleries, and the vast octagonal vestibule on which the principal apartments opened, it retained many noble indications of the purposes to which it was formerly destined. At present, a lazy

innkeeper, who did nothing; his bustling wife, who seemed equally at home in the saloon, the kitchen, and even the stable; and a solitary waiter, were the only inmates, except the Herberts, and a travelling party, who had arrived shortly after them, and who, like them, had been driven by stress of weather to seek refuge at a place where otherwise they had not intended to remain.

A blazing fire of pine wood soon gave cheerfulness to the vast and somewhat desolate apartment into which our friends had been ushered; their sleeping-room was adjoining, but separated. In spite of the lamentations of Pauncefort, who had been drenched to the skin, and who required much more waiting upon than her mistress, Lady Annabel and Venetia at length produced some degree of comfort. They drew the table near the fire; they ensconced themselves behind an old screen; and, producing their books and work notwithstanding the tempest, they contrived to domesticate themselves at Rovigo.

'I cannot help thinking of Arquâ and its happy tenants, mamma,' said Venetia.

'And yet, perhaps, they may have their secret sorrows,' said Lady Annabel. 'I know not why, I always associate seclusion with unhappiness.'

Venetia remembered Cherbury. Their life at Cherbury was like the life of the German at Arquâ. A chance visitor to Cherbury in their absence, viewing the beautiful residence and the fair domain, and listening to the tales which they well might hear of all her mother's grace and goodness, might perhaps too envy its happy occupiers. But were they happy? Had they no secret sorrows? Was their seclusion associated with unhappiness? These were reflections

that made Venetia grave; but she opened her journal, and, describing the adventures and feelings of the morning, she dissipated some mournful reminiscences.

The storm still raged; Venetia had quitted the saloon in which her mother and herself had been sitting, and had repaired to the adjoining chamber to fetch a book. The door of this room, opened, as all the other entrances of the different apartments, on to the octagonal vestibule. Just as she was quitting the room, and about to return to her mother, the door of the opposite chamber opened, and there came forward a gentleman in a Venetian dress of black velvet. His stature was much above the middle height, though his figure, which was remarkably slender, was bowed; not by years certainly, for his countenance, though singularly emaciated, still retained traces of youth. His hair, which he wore very long, descended over his shoulders, and must originally have been of a light golden colour, but now was severely touched with grey. His countenance was very pallid, so colourless indeed that its aspect was almost unearthly; but his large blue eyes, that were deeply set in his majestic brow, still glittered with fire, and their expression alone gave life to a visage, which, though singularly beautiful in its outline, from its faded and attenuated character seemed rather the countenance of a corpse than of a breathing being.

The glance of the stranger caught that of Venetia, and seemed to fascinate her. She suddenly became motionless; wildly she stared at the stranger, who, in his turn, seemed arrested in his progress, and stood still as a statue, with his eyes fixed with absorbing interest on the beautiful apparition before him. An expression of perplexity and pain flitted over the

amazed features of Venetia; and then it seemed that, by some almost supernatural effort, confusion amounting to stupefaction suddenly brightened and expanded into keen and overwhelming intelligence. Exclaiming in a frenzied tone, 'My father!' Venetia sprang forward, and fell senseless on the stranger's breast.

Such, after so much mystery, so many aspirations, so much anxiety, and so much suffering, such was the first meeting of Venetia Herbert with her father!

Marmion Herbert, himself trembling and speechless, bore the apparently lifeless Venetia into his apartment. Not permitting her for a moment to quit his embrace, he seated himself, and gazed silently on the inanimate and unknown form he held so strangely within his arms. Those lips, now closed as if in death, had uttered however one word which thrilled to his heart, and still echoed, like a supernatural annunciation, within his ear. He examined with an eye of agitated scrutiny the fair features no longer sensible of his presence. He gazed upon that transparent brow, as if he would read some secret in its pellucid veins; and touched those long locks of golden hair with a trembling finger, that seemed to be wildly seeking for some vague and miraculous proof of inexpressible identity. The fair creature had called him 'Father.' His dreaming reveries had never pictured a being half so beautiful! She called him 'Father!' The word had touched his brain, as lightning cuts a tree. He looked around him with a distracted air, then gazed on the tranced form he held with a glance which would have penetrated her soul, and murmured unconsciously the wild word she had uttered. She called him 'Father!' He dared not think who she might be. His thoughts were wandering in a distant land; visions of another

life, another country, rose before him, troubled and obscure. Baffled aspirations, and hopes blighted in the bud, and the cherished secrets of his lorn existence, clustered like clouds upon his perplexed yet creative brain. She called him 'Father!' It was a word to make him mad. 'Father!' This beautiful being had called him 'Father,' and seemed to have expired, as it were, in the irresistible expression. His heart yearned to her; he had met her embrace with an inexplicable sympathy; her devotion had seemed, as it were, her duty and his right. Yet who was she? He was a father. It was a fact, a fact alike full of solace and mortification, the consciousness of which never deserted him. But he was the father of an unknown child; to him the child of his poetic dreams, rather than his reality. And now there came this radiant creature, and called him 'Father!' Was he awake, and in the harsh busy world; or was it the apparition of an over-excited imagination, brooding too constantly on one fond idea, on which he now gazed so fixedly? Was this some spirit? Would that she would speak again! Would that those sealed lips would part and utter but one word, would but again call him 'Father,' and he asked no more!

'Father!' to be called 'Father' by one whom he could not name, by one over whom he mused in solitude, by one to whom he had poured forth all the passion of his desolate soul; to be called 'Father' by this being was the aspiring secret of his life. He had painted her to himself in his loneliness, he had conjured up dreams of ineffable loveliness and inexpressible love; he had led with her an imaginary life of thrilling tenderness; he had indulged in a delicious

fancy of mutual interchange of the most exquisite offices of our nature; and then, when he had sometimes looked around him, and found no daughter there, no beaming countenance of purity to greet him with its constant smile, and receive the quick and ceaseless tribute of his vigilant affection, the tears had stolen down his lately-excited features, all the consoling beauty of his visions had vanished into air, he had felt the deep curse of his desolation, and had anathematised the cunning brain that made his misery a thousand-fold keener by the mockery of its transporting illusions.

And now there came this transcendent creature, with a form more glowing than all his dreams; a voice more musical than a seraphic chorus, though it had uttered but one thrilling word: there came this transcendent creature, beaming with grace, beauty, and love, and had fallen upon his heart, and called him 'Father!'

Herbert looked up to heaven as if waiting for some fresh miracle to terminate the harrowing suspense of his tortured mind; Herbert looked down upon his mysterious companion; the rose was gradually returning to her cheek, her lips seemed to tremble with reviving breath. There was only one word more strange to his ear than that which she had uttered, but an irresistible impulse sent forth the sound.

'Venetia!' he exclaimed.

The eyes of the maiden slowly opened; she stared around her with a vague glance of perplexity, not unmingled with pain; she looked up; she caught the rapt gaze of her father, bending over her with fondness yet with fear; his lips moved, for a moment they refused to articulate, yet at length they again

uttered, 'Venetia!' And the only response she made was to cling to him with nervous energy, and hide her face in his bosom.

Herbert pressed her to his heart. Yet even now he hesitated to credit the incredible union. Again he called her by her name, but added with rising confidence, 'My Venetia!'

'Your child, your child,' she murmured. 'Your own Venetia.'

He pressed his lips to hers; he breathed over her a thousand blessings; she felt his tears trickling on her neck.

At length Venetia looked up and sighed; she was exhausted by the violence of her emotions: her father relaxed his grasp with infinite tenderness, watching her with delicate solicitude; she leaned her arm upon his shoulder with downcast eyes.

Herbert gently took her disengaged hand, and pressed it to his lips. 'I am as in a dream,' murmured Venetia.

'The daughter of my heart has found her sire,' said Herbert in an impassioned voice. 'The father who has long lived upon her fancied image; the father, I fear, she has been bred up to hate.'

'Oh! no, no!' said Venetia, speaking rapidly and with a slight shiver; 'not hate! it was a secret, his being was a secret, his name was never mentioned; it was unknown.'

'A secret! My existence a secret from my child, my beautiful fond child!' exclaimed Herbert in a tone even more desolate than bitter. 'Why did they not let you at least hate me!'

'My father!' said Venetia, in a firmer voice, and with returning animation, yet gazing around her with

a still distracted air. 'Am I with my father? The clouds clear from my brain. I remember that we met. Where was it? Was it at Arquâ? In the garden? I am with my father!' she continued in a rapid tone and with a wild smile. 'Oh! let me look on him;' and she turned round, and gazed upon Herbert with a serious scrutiny. 'Are you my father?' she continued, in a still, small voice. 'Your hair has grown grey since last I saw you; it was golden then, like mine. I know you are my father,' she added, after a pause, and in a tone almost of gaiety. 'You cannot deceive me. I know your name. They did not tell it me; I found it out myself, but it made me very ill, very; and I do not think I have ever been quite well since. You are Marmion Herbert. My mother had a dog called Marmion, when I was a little girl, but I did not know I had a father then.'

'Venetia!' exclaimed Herbert, with streaming eyes, as he listened with anguish to these incoherent sentences. 'My Venetia loves me!'

'Oh! she always loved you,' replied Venetia; 'always, always. Before she knew her father she loved him. I dare say you think I do not love you, because I am not used to speak to a father. Everything must be learnt, you know,' she said with a faint, sad smile; 'and then it was so sudden! I do not think my mother knows it yet. And, after all, though I found you out in a moment, still, I know not why, I thought it was a picture. But I read your verses, and I knew them by heart at once; but now my memory has worn out, for I am ill, and everything has gone cross with me. And all because my father wrote me verses. 'Tis very strange, is not it?'

'Sweet lamb of my affections,' exclaimed Herbert

to himself, 'I fear me much this sudden meeting with one from whose bosom you ought never to have been estranged, has been for the moment too great a trial for this delicate brain.'

'I will not tell my mother,' said Venetia; 'she will be angry.'

'Your mother, darling; where is your mother?' said Herbert, looking, if possible, paler than he was wont.

'She was at Arquâ with me, and on the lake for months, but where we are now, I cannot say. If I could only remember where we are now,' she added with earnestness, and with a struggle to collect herself, 'I should know everything.'

'This is Rovigo, my child, the inn of Rovigo. You are travelling with your mother. Is it not so?'

'Yes! and we came this morning, and it rained. Now I know everything,' said Venetia, with an animated and even cheerful air.

'And we met in the vestibule, my sweet,' continued Herbert, in a soothing voice; 'we came out of opposite chambers, and you knew me; my Venetia knew me. Try to tell me, my darling,' he added, in a tone of coaxing fondness, 'try to remember how Venetia knew her father.'

'He was so like his picture at Cherbury,' replied Venetia.

'Cherbury!' exclaimed Herbert, with a deep-drawn sigh.

'Only your hair has grown grey, dear father; but it is long, quite as long as in your picture.'

'Her dog called Marmion!' murmured Herbert to himself, 'and my portrait, too! You saw your father's portrait, then, every day, love?'

'Oh, no!' said Venetia, shaking her head, 'only once, only once. And I never told mamma. It was where no one could go, but I went there one day. It was in a room that no one ever entered except mamma, but I entered it. I stole the key, and had a fever, and in my fever I confessed all. But I never knew it. Mamma never told me I confessed it, until many, many years afterwards. It was the first, the only time she ever mentioned to me your name, my father.'

'And she told you to shun me, to hate me? She told you I was a villain, a profligate, a demon? eh? eh? Was it not so, Venetia?'

'She told me that you had broken her heart,' said Venetia; 'and she prayed to God that her child might not be so miserable.'

'Oh, my Venetia!' exclaimed Herbert, pressing her to his breast, and in a voice stifled with emotion, 'I feel now we might have been happy!'

In the meantime the prolonged absence of her daughter surprised Lady Annabel. At length she rose, and walked into their adjoining apartment, but to her surprise Venetia was not there. Returning to her saloon, she found Pauncefort and the waiter arranging the table for dinner.

'Where is Miss Herbert, Pauncefort?' inquired Lady Annabel.

'I am sure, my lady, I cannot say. I have no doubt she is in the other room.'

'She is not there, for I have just quitted it,' replied Lady Annabel. 'How very strange! You have not seen the signora?' inquired Lady Annabel of the waiter.

'The signora is in the room with the gentleman.'

'The gentleman!' exclaimed Lady Annabel. 'Tell me, good man, what do you mean? I am inquiring for my daughter.'

'I know well the signora is talking of her daughter,' replied the waiter.

'But do you know my daughter by sight? Surely you must mean some one else.'

'Do I know the signora's daughter?' said the waiter. 'The beautiful young lady, with hair like Santa Marguerita, in the church of the Holy Trinity! I tell the signora, I saw her carried into numero 4, in the arms of the Signor Forestiere, who arrived this morning.'

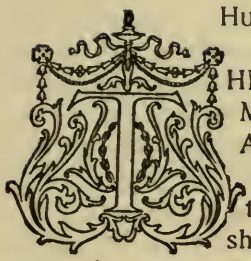
'Venetia is ill,' said Lady Annabel. 'Show me to the room, my friend.'

Lady Annabel accordingly, with a hurried step, following her guide, quitted the chamber. Pauncefort remained fixed to the earth, the very picture of perplexity.

'Well, to be sure!' she exclaimed, 'was anything ever so strange! In the arms of Signor Forestiere! Forestiere. An English name. There is no person of the name of Forest that I know. And in his arms, too! I should not wonder if it was my lord, after all. Well, I should be glad if he were to come to light again, for, after all, my lady may say what she likes, but if Miss Venetia don't marry Lord Cadurcis, I must say marriages were never made in heaven!'

CHAPTER LXIII.

Husband and Wife.



HE waiter threw open the door of Mr. Herbert's chamber, and Lady Annabel swept in with a majesty she generally assumed when about to meet strangers. The first thing she beheld was her daughter in the arms of a man whose head was bent, and who was embracing her. Notwithstanding this astounding spectacle, Lady Annabel neither started nor screamed; she only said in an audible tone, and one rather expressing astonishment than agitation, 'Venetia!'

Immediately the stranger looked up, and Lady Annabel beheld her husband!

She was rooted to the earth. She turned deadly pale; for a moment her countenance expressed only terror, but the terror quickly changed into aversion. Suddenly she rushed forward, and exclaimed in a tone in which decision conquered dismay, 'Restore me my child!'

The moment Herbert had recognised his wife he had dexterously disengaged himself from the grasp of Venetia, whom he left on the chair, and meeting Lady Annabel with extended arms, that seemed to depre-

cate her wrath, he said, 'I seek not to deprive you of her; she is yours, and she is worthy of you; but respect, for a few moments, the feelings of a father who has met his only child in a manner so unforeseen.'

The presence of her mother instantaneously restored Venetia to herself. Her mind was in a moment cleared and settled. Her past and peculiar life, and all its incidents, recurred to her with their accustomed order, vividness, and truth. She thoroughly comprehended her present situation. Actuated by long-cherished feelings and the necessity of the occasion, she rose and threw herself at her mother's feet and exclaimed, 'O mother! he is my father; love him!'

Lady Annabel stood with an averted countenance, Venetia clinging to her hand, which she had caught when she rushed forward, and which now fell passive by Lady Annabel's side, giving no sign, by any pressure or motion, of the slightest sympathy with her daughter, or feeling for the strange and agonising situation in which they were both placed.

'Annabel,' said Herbert, in a voice that trembled, though the speaker struggled to appear calm, 'be charitable! I have never intruded upon your privacy; I will not now outrage it. Accident, or some diviner motive, has brought us together this day. If you will not treat me with kindness, look not upon me with aversion before our child.'

Still she was silent and motionless, her countenance hidden from her husband and her daughter, but her erect and haughty form betokening her inexorable mind. 'Annabel,' said Herbert, who had now withdrawn to some distance, and leant against a pillar, 'will not then nearly twenty years of desolation purchase one moment of intercourse? I have injured you.

Be it so. This is not the moment I will defend myself. But have I not suffered? Is not this meeting a punishment deeper even than your vengeance could devise? Is it nothing to behold this beautiful child, and feel that she is only yours? Annabel, look on me, look on me only one moment! My frame is bowed, my hair is grey, my heart is withered; the principle of existence waxes faint and slack in this attenuated frame. I am no longer that Herbert on whom you once smiled, but a man stricken with many sorrows. The odious conviction of my life cannot long haunt you; yet a little while, and my memory will alone remain. Think of this, Annabel; I beseech you, think of it. Oh! believe me, when the speedy hour arrives that will consign me to the grave, where I shall at least find peace, it will not be utterly without satisfaction that you will remember that we met if even by accident, and parted at least not with harshness!'

'Mother, dearest mother!' murmured Venetia, 'speak to him, look on him!'

'Venetia,' said her mother, without turning her head, but in a calm, firm tone, 'your father has seen you, has conversed with you. Between your father and myself there can be nothing to communicate, either of fact or feeling. Now let us depart.'

'No, no, not depart!' said Venetia frantically. 'You did not say depart, dear mother! I cannot go,' she added in a low and half-hysterical voice.

'Desert me, then,' said the mother. 'A fitting consequence of your private communications with your father,' she added in a tone of bitter scorn; and Lady Annabel moved to depart, but Venetia, still kneeling, clung to her convulsively.

'Mother, mother, you shall not go; you shall not leave me; we will never part, mother,' continued Venetia, in a tone almost of violence, as she perceived her mother give no indication of yielding to her wish. 'Are my feelings, then, nothing?' she then exclaimed. 'Is this your sense of my fidelity? Am I for ever to be a victim?' She loosened her hold of her mother's hand, her mother moved on, Venetia fell upon her forehead and uttered a faint scream. The heart of Lady Annabel relented when she fancied her daughter suffered physical pain, however slight; she hesitated, she turned, she hastened to her child; her husband had simultaneously advanced; in the rapid movement and confusion her hand touched that of Herbert.

'I yield her to you, Annabel,' said Herbert, placing Venetia in her mother's arms. 'You mistake me, as you have often mistaken me, if you think I seek to practise on the feelings of this angelic child. She is yours; may she compensate you for the misery I have caused you, but never sought to occasion!'

'I am not hurt, dear mother,' said Venetia, as her mother tenderly examined her forehead. 'Dear, dear mother, why did you reproach me?'

'Forget it,' said Lady Annabel, in a softened tone; 'for indeed you are irreproachable.'

'O Annabel!' said Herbert, 'may not this child be some atonement? this child, of whom I solemnly declare I would not deprive you, though I would willingly forfeit my life for a year of her affection; and your — your sufferance,' he added.

'Mother! speak to him,' said Venetia, with her head on her mother's bosom, who still, however, remained rigidly standing. But Lady Annabel was silent.

'Your mother was ever stern and cold, Venetia,' said Herbert, the bitterness of his heart at length expressing itself.

'Never,' said Venetia, with great energy; 'never; you know not my mother. Was she stern and cold when she visited each night in secret your portrait?' said Venetia, looking round upon her astonished father, with her bright grey eye. 'Was she stern and cold when she wept over your poems, those poems whose characters your own hand had traced? Was she stern and cold when she hung a withered wreath on your bridal bed, the bed to which I owe my miserable being? Oh, no, my father! sad was the hour of separation for my mother and yourself. It may have dimmed the lustre of her eye, and shaded your locks with premature grey; but whatever may have been its inscrutable cause, there was one victim of that dark hour, less thought of than yourselves, and yet a greater sufferer than both, the being in whose heart you implanted affections, whose unfulfilled tenderness has made that wretched thing they call your daughter.'

'Annabel!' exclaimed Herbert, rapidly advancing, with an imploring gesture, and speaking in a tone of infinite anguish, 'Annabel, Annabel, even now we can be happy!'

The countenance of his wife was troubled, but its stern expression had disappeared. The long-concealed, yet at length irrepressible, emotion of Venetia had touched her heart. In the conflict of affection between the claims of the parents, Lady Annabel had observed with a sentiment of sweet emotion, in spite of all the fearfulness of the meeting, that Venetia had not faltered in her devotion to her mother.

The mental torture of her child touched her to the quick. In the excitement of her anguish, Venetia had expressed a profound sentiment, the irresistible truth of which Lady Annabel could no longer withstand. She had too long and too fondly schooled herself to look upon the outraged wife as the only victim. There was, then, at length it appeared to this stern-minded woman, another. She had laboured in the flattering delusion that the devotion of a mother's love might compensate to Venetia for the loss of that other parent, which in some degree Lady Annabel had occasioned her; for the worthless husband, had she chosen to tolerate the degrading connection, might nevertheless have proved a tender father. But Nature, it seemed, had shrunk from the vain effort of the isolated mother. The seeds of affection for the father of her being were mystically implanted in the bosom of his child. Lady Annabel recalled the harrowing hours that this attempt by her to curb and control the natural course and rising sympathies of filial love had cost her child, on whom she had so vigilantly practised it. She recalled her strange aspirations, her inspired curiosity, her brooding reveries, her fitful melancholy, her terrible illness, her resignation, her fidelity, her sacrifices: there came across the mind of Lady Annabel a mortifying conviction that the devotion to her child, on which she had so rated herself, might after all only prove a subtle form of profound selfishness; and that Venetia, instead of being the idol of her love, might eventually be the martyr of her pride. And, thinking of these things, she wept.

This evidence of emotion, which in such a spirit Herbert knew how to estimate, emboldened him to

advance; he fell on one knee before her and her daughter; gently he stole her hand, and pressed it to his lips. It was not withdrawn, and Venetia laid her hand upon theirs, and would have bound them together had her mother been relentless. It seemed to Venetia that she was at length happy, but she would not speak, she would not disturb the still and silent bliss of the impending reconciliation. Was it then indeed at hand? In truth, the deportment of Herbert throughout the whole interview, so delicate, so subdued, so studiously avoiding the slightest rivalry with his wife in the affections of their child, and so carefully abstaining from attempting in the slightest degree to control the feelings of Venetia, had not been lost upon Lady Annabel. And when she thought of him, so changed from what he had been, grey, bent, and careworn, with all the lustre that had once so fascinated her, faded, and talking of that impending fate which his wan though spiritual countenance too clearly intimated, her heart melted.

Suddenly the door burst open, and there stalked into the room a woman of eminent but most graceful stature, and of a most sovereign and voluptuous beauty. She was habited in the Venetian dress; her dark eyes glittered with fire, her cheek was inflamed with no amiable emotion, and her long black hair was disordered by the violence of her gesture.

'And who are these?' she exclaimed in a shrill voice.

All started; Herbert sprang up from his position with a glance of withering rage. Venetia was perplexed, Lady Annabel looked round, and recognised the identical face, however distorted by passion, that she had admired in the portrait at Arquâ.

'And who are these?' exclaimed the intruder, advancing. 'Perfidious Marmion! to whom do you dare to kneel?'

Lady Annabel drew herself up to a height that seemed to look down even upon this tall stranger. The expression of majestic scorn that she cast upon the intruder made her, in spite of all her violence and excitement, tremble and be silent: she felt cowed, she knew not why.

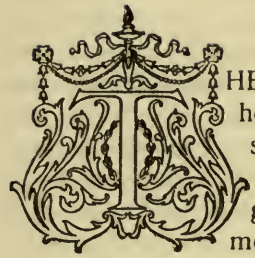
'Come, Venetia,' said Lady Annabel with all her usual composure, 'let me save my daughter at least from this profanation.'

'Annabel!' said Herbert, rushing after them, 'be charitable, be just!' He followed them to the threshold of the door; Venetia was silent, for she was alarmed.

'Adieu, Marmion!' said Lady Annabel, looking over her shoulder with a bitter smile, but placing her daughter before her, as if to guard her. 'Adieu, Marmion! adieu for ever!'

CHAPTER LXIV.

A Separation.



HE moon shone brightly on the house of Petrarch, and the hamlet slept in peace. Not a sound was heard, save the shrill voice of the grasshoppers, so incessant that its monotony blended, as it were, with the stillness. Over the green hills and the far expanse of the sheeny plain, the beautiful light of heaven fell with all the magical repose of the serene hour, an hour that brought to one troubled breast, and one distracted spirit, in that still and simple village, no quietude.

Herbert came forth into the balcony of his residence, and leaning over the balustrade, revolved in his agitated mind the strange and stirring incidents of the day. His wife and his child had quitted the inn of Rovigo instantly after that mortifying rencounter that had dashed so cruelly to the ground all his sweet and quickly-rising hopes. As for his companion, she had by his peremptory desire returned to Arquâ alone; he was not in a mood to endure her society; but he had conducted himself to her mildly, though with firmness; he had promised to follow her, and, in pursuance of his pledge, he rode home alone.

He was greeted on his return by his servant, full of the visit of the morning. With an irresistible curiosity, Herbert had made him describe every incident that had occurred, and repeat a hundred times every word that the visitors had uttered. He listened with some consolation, however mournful, to his wife's praises of the unknown stranger's life; he gazed with deepest interest upon the autograph of his daughter on the wall of his library. He had not confessed to his mistress the relation which the two strangers bore to him; yet he was influenced in concealing the real circumstances only by an indefinite sentiment, that made him reluctant to acknowledge to her ties so pure. The feelings of the parent overpowered the principles of the philosopher. This lady indeed, although at the moment she had indulged in so violent an ebullition of temper, possessed little influence over the mind of her companion. Herbert, however fond of solitude, required in his restricted world the graceful results of feminine superintendence. Time had stilled his passions, and cooled the fervour of his soul. The age of his illusions had long passed. This was a connection that had commenced in no extravagant or romantic mood, and perhaps for that reason had endured. He had become acquainted with her on his first unknown arrival in Italy, from America, now nearly two years back. It had been maintained on his side by a temper naturally sweet, and which, exhausted by years of violent emotion, now required only repose; seeking, in a female friend, a form that should not outrage an eye ever musing on the beautiful, and a disposition that should contribute to his comfort, and never ruffle his feelings. Separated from his wife by her own act, whatever might have been

its impulse, and for so long an interval, it was a connection which the world in general might have looked upon with charity, which in her calmer hours one would imagine even Lady Annabel might have glanced over without much bitterness. Certainly it was one which, under all the circumstances of the case, could scarcely be esteemed by her as an outrage or an insult; but even Herbert felt, with all his philosophy and proud freedom from prejudice, that the rencounter of the morning was one which no woman could at the moment tolerate, few eventually excuse, and which of all incidents was that which would most tend to confirm his wife in her stoical obduracy. Of his offences towards her, whatever were their number or their quality, this surely was the least, and yet its results upon his life and fortunes would in all probability only be equalled by the mysterious cause of their original separation. But how much more bitter than that original separation was their present parting! Mortifying and annoying as had been the original occurrence, it was one that many causes and considerations combined to enable Herbert to support. He was then in the very prime of youth, inexperienced, sanguine, restless, and adventurous, with the whole world and its unknown results before him, and freedom for which he ever sighed to compensate for the loss of that domestic joy that he was then unable to appreciate. But now twenty years, which in the career of such a spirit, were equal to a century of the existence of coarser clay, had elapsed; he was bowed with thought and suffering, if not by time; his conscience was light, but it was sad; his illusions had all vanished; he knew the world, and all that the world could bring,

and he disregarded them; and the result of all his profound study, lofty aspirations, and great conduct was, that he sighed for rest. The original catastrophe had been merely a separation between a husband and a wife; the one that had just happened involved other feelings; the father was also separated from his child, and a child of such surpassing qualities that his brief acquaintance with her had alone sufficed to convert his dream of domestic repose into a vision of domestic bliss.

Beautiful Venetia! so fair, and yet so dutiful; with a bosom teeming with such exquisite sensibilities, and a mind bright with such acute and elevated intelligence! An abstract conception of the sentiments that might subsist between a father and a daughter, heightened by all the devices of a glowing imagination, had haunted indeed occasionally the solitary musing of Marmion Herbert; but what was this creation of his poetic brain compared with the reality that now had touched his human heart? Vainly had he believed that repose was the only solace that remained for his exhausted spirit. He found that a new passion now swayed his soul; a passion, too, that he had never proved; of a nature most peculiar; pure, gentle, refined, yet ravishing and irresistible, compared with which all former transports, no matter how violent, tumultuous, and exciting, seemed evanescent and superficial: they were indeed the wind, the fire, and the tempest that had gone before, but this was the still small voice that followed, excelled, and survived their might and majesty, unearthly and eternal!

His heart melted to his daughter, nor did he care to live without her love and presence. His philo-

sophical theories all vanished. He felt how dependent we are in this world on our natural ties, and how limited, with all his arrogance, is the sphere of man. Dreaming of philanthropy, he had broken his wife's heart, and bruised, perhaps irreparably, the spirit of his child; he had rendered those miserable who depended on his love, and for whose affection his heart now yearned to that degree that he could not contemplate existence without their active sympathy.

Was it, then, too late! Was it, then, impossible to regain that Paradise he had forfeited so weakly, and of whose amaranthine bowers, but a few hours since, he had caught such an entrancing glimpse, of which the gate for a moment seemed about to re-open! In spite of all, then, Annabel still loved him, loved him passionately, visited his picture, mused over the glowing expression of their loves, wept over the bridal bed so soon deserted! She had a dog, too, when Venetia was a child, and called it Marmion.

The recollection of this little trait, so trifling, yet so touching, made him weep even with wildness. The tears poured down his cheeks in torrents, he sobbed convulsively, his very heart seemed to burst. For some minutes he leant over the balustrade in a paroxysm of grief.

He looked up. The convent hill rose before him, bright in the moon; beneath was his garden; around him the humble roofs that he made happy. It was not without an effort that he recalled the locality, that he remembered he was at Arquâ. And who was sleeping within the house? Not his wife, Annabel was far away with their daughter. The vision of his whole life passed before him. Study and strife, and fame and love; the pride of the philosopher, the rap-

ture of the poet, the blaze of eloquence, the clash of arms, the vows of passion, the execration and the applause of millions; both once alike welcome to his indomitable soul! And what had they borne to him? Misery. He called up the image of his wife, young, beautiful, and noble, with a mind capable of comprehending his loftiest and his finest moods, with a soul of matchless purity, and a temper whose winning tenderness had only been equalled by her elevated sense of self-respect; a woman that might have figured in the days of chivalry, soft enough to be his slave, but too proud to be his victim. He called up her image in the castle of his fathers, exercising in a domain worthy of such a mistress all those sweet offices of life which here, in this hired roof in a strange land, and with his crippled means, he had yet found solacing. He conjured before him a bud by the side of that beauteous flower, sharing all her lustre and and all her fragrance,—his own Venetia! What happiness might not have been his? And for what had he forfeited it? A dream, with no dream-like beauty; a perturbed, and restless, and agitated dream, from which he had now woke shattered and exhausted.

He had sacrificed his fortune, he had forfeited his country, he had alienated his wife, and he had lost his child; the home of his heroic ancestry, the ancient land whose fame and power they had created, the beauteous and gifted woman who would have clung for ever to his bosom, and her transcendent offspring worthy of all their loves! Profound philosopher!

The clock of the convent struck the second hour after midnight. Herbert started. And all this time where were Annabel and Venetia? They still lived, they were in the same country, an hour ago

they were under the same roof, in the same chamber; their hands had joined, their hearts had opened, for a moment he had dared to believe that all that he cared for might be regained. And why was it not? The cause, the cause? It recurred to him with associations of dislike, of disgust, of wrath, of hatred, of which one whose heart was so tender, and whose reason was so clear, could under the influence of no other feelings have been capable. The surrounding scene, that had so often soothed his mournful soul, and connected it with the last hours of a spirit to whom he bore much resemblance, was now looked upon with aversion. To rid himself of ties, now so dreadful, was all his ambition. He entered the house quickly, and, seating himself in his closet, he wrote these words:

'You beheld this morning my wife and child; we can meet no more. All that I can effect to console you under this sudden separation shall be done. My banker from Bologna will be here in two days; express to him all your wishes.'

It was written, sealed, directed, and left upon the table at which they had so often been seated. Herbert descended into the garden, saddled his horse, and in a few minutes, in the heart of night, had quitted Arquâ.

CHAPTER LXV.

Venice.

THE moment that the wife of Marmion Herbert re-entered her saloon, she sent for her courier and ordered horses to her carriage instantly. Until they were announced as ready, Lady Annabel walked up and down the room with an impatient step, but was as completely silent as the miserable Venetia, who remained weeping on the sofa. The confusion and curiosity of Mistress Pauncefort were extraordinary. She still had a lurking suspicion that the gentleman was Lord Cadurcis, and she seized the first opportunity of leaving the room and flouncing into that of the stranger, as if by mistake, determined to catch a glimpse of him; but all her notable skill was baffled, for she had scarcely opened the door before she was met by the Italian lady, who received Mistress Pauncefort's ready-made apology, and bowed her away. The faithful attendant then hurried downstairs to cross-examine the waiter, but, though she gained considerable information from that functionary, it was of a perplexing nature; for from him she only learnt that the stranger lived at Arquâ. 'The German gentle-

man!' soliloquised Mistress Pauncefort; 'and what could he have to say to Miss Venetia! and a married man, too! Well, to be sure, there is nothing like travelling for adventures! And I must say, considering all that I know, and how I have held my tongue for nearly twenty years, I think it is very strange indeed of my lady to have any secrets from me. Secrets, indeed! Poh!' and Mistress Pauncefort flounced again into Lady Annabel's room, with a face of offended pride, knocking the books about, dashing down writing-cases, tossing about work, and making as much noise and disturbance as if she had a separate quarrel with every single article under her superintendence.

In the meantime the carriage was prepared, to which they were obliged almost to carry Venetia, feeble and stupefied with grief. Uncertain of her course, but anxious, in the present state of her daughter, for rest and quiet, Lady Annabel ordered the courier to proceed to Padua, at which city they arrived late at night, scarcely a word having been interchanged during the whole journey between Lady Annabel and her child, though infinite were the soft and soothing attentions which the mother lavished upon her. Night, however, brought no rest to Venetia; and the next day her state appeared so alarming to Lady Annabel that she would have instantly summoned medical assistance had it not been for Venetia's strong objections. 'Indeed, dear mother,' she said, 'it is not physicians that I require. They cannot cure me. Let me be quiet.'

The same cause, indeed, which during the last five years had at intervals so seriously menaced the existence of this unhappy girl, was now at work with renovated and even irresistible influence. Her

frame could no longer endure the fatal action of her over-excited nerves. Her first illness, however alarming, had been baffled by time, skill, and principally by the vigour of an extremely youthful frame, then a stranger to any serious indisposition. At a later period, the change of life induced by their residence at Weymouth had permitted her again to rally. She had quitted England with renewed symptoms of her former attack, but a still more powerful change, not only of scene, but of climate and country, and the regular and peaceful life she had led on the Lago Maggiore, had again reassured the mind of her anxious mother. This last adventure at Rovigo, however, prostrated her. The strange surprise, the violent development of feeling, the agonising doubts and hopes, the terrible suspense, the profound and bitter and overwhelming disappointment, all combined to shake her mind to its very foundations. She felt for the first time that she could no longer bear up against the torture of her singular position. Her energy was entirely exhausted; she was no longer capable of making the slightest exertion; she took refuge in that torpid resignation that results from utter hopelessness.

Lying on her sofa with her eyes fixed in listless abstraction, the scene at Rovigo flitted unceasingly before her languid vision. At length she had seen that father, that unknown and mysterious father, whose idea had haunted her infancy as if by inspiration; to gain the slightest knowledge of whom had cost her such long and acute suffering; and round whose image for so many years every thought of her intelligence, and every feeling of her heart, had clustered like spirits round some dim and mystical altar. At length she had beheld him; she had gazed on

that spiritual countenance; she had listened to the tender accents of that musical voice; within his arms she had been folded with rapture, and pressed to a heart that seemed to beat only for her felicity. The blessing of her father, uttered by his long-loved lips, had descended on her brow, and been sealed with his passionate embrace.

The entrance of her mother, that terrible contest of her lacerated heart, when her parents, as it were, appealed to her love, which they would not share; the inspiration of her despair, that so suddenly had removed the barriers of long years, before whose irresistible pathos her father had bent a penitent, and her mother's inexorable pride had melted; the ravishing bliss that for a moment had thrilled through her, being experienced too for the first time, when she felt that her parents were again united and bound by the sweet tie of her now happy existence; this was the drama acted before her with an almost ceaseless repetition of its transporting incidents; and when she looked round, and beheld her mother sitting alone, and watching her with a countenance almost of anguish, it was indeed with extreme difficulty that Venetia could persuade herself that all had not been a reverie; and she was only convinced of the contrary by that heaviness of the heart which too quickly assures us of the reality of those sorrows of which fancy for a moment may cheat us into scepticism.

And indeed her mother was scarcely less miserable. The sight of Herbert, so changed from the form that she remembered; those tones of heart-rending sincerity, in which he had mournfully appealed to the influence of time and sorrow on his life, still greatly affected her. She had indulged for a moment in a

dream of domestic love, she had cast to the winds the inexorable determination of a life, and had mingled her tears with those of her husband and her child. And how had she been repaid? By a degrading catastrophe, from whose revolting associations her mind recoiled with indignation and disgust. But her lingering feeling for her husband, her own mortification, were as nothing compared with the harrowing anxiety she now entertained for her daughter. To converse with Venetia on the recent occurrence was impossible. It was a subject which admitted of no discussion. They had passed a week at Padua, and the slightest allusion to what had happened had never been made by either Lady Annabel or her child. It was only by her lavish testimonies of affection that Lady Annabel conveyed to Venetia how deeply she sympathised with her, and how unhappy she was herself. She had, indeed, never quitted for a moment the side of her daughter, and witnessed each day, with renewed anguish, her deplorable condition; for Venetia continued in a state which, to those unacquainted with her, might have been mistaken for insensibility, but her mother knew too well that it was despair. She never moved, she never sighed, nor wept; she took no notice of anything that occurred; she sought relief in no resources. Books, and drawings, and music, were quite forgotten by her; nothing amused and nothing annoyed her; she was not even fretful; she had, apparently, no physical ailment; she remained pale and silent, plunged in an absorbing paroxysm of overwhelming woe.

The unhappy Lady Annabel, at a loss how to act, at length thought it might be advisable to cross over to Venice. She felt assured now, that it would be a

long time, if ever, before her child could again endure the fatigue of travel; and she thought that for every reason, whether for domestic comfort or medical advice, or those multifarious considerations which interest the invalid, a capital was by far the most desirable residence for them. There was a time when a visit to the city that had given her a name had been a favourite dream of Venetia; she had often sighed to be within

> The sea-born city's walls; the graceful towers
> Loved by the bard.

Those lines of her father had long echoed in her ear; but now the proposition called no light to her glazed eye, nor summoned for an instant the colour back to her cheek. She listened to her mother's suggestion, and expressed her willingness to do whatever she desired. Venice to her was now only a name; for, without the presence and the united love of both her parents, no spot on earth could interest, and no combination of circumstances affect her. To Venice, however, they departed, having previously taken care that every arrangement should be made for their reception. The English ambassador at the Ducal court was a relative of Lady Annabel, and therefore no means or exertions were spared to study and secure the convenience and accommodation of the invalid. The barge of the ambassador met them at Fusina; and when Venetia beheld the towers and cupolas of Venice, suffused with a golden light and rising out of the bright blue waters, for a moment her spirit seemed to lighten. It is indeed a spectacle as beautiful as rare, and one to which the world offers few, if any, rivals. Gliding over the great Lagune, the

buildings, with which the pictures at Cherbury had already made her familiar, gradually rose before her; the mosque-like Church of St. Marc, the tall Campanile red in the sun, the Moresco Palace of the Doges, the deadly Bridge of Sighs, and the dark structure to which it leads.

Venice had not then fallen. The gorgeous standards of the sovereign republic, and its tributary kingdoms, still waved in the Place of St. Marc; the Bucentaur was not rotting in the Arsenal, and the warlike galleys of the state cruised without the Lagune; a busy and picturesque population swarmed in all directions; and the Venetian noble, the haughtiest of men, might still be seen proudly moving from the council of state, or stepping into a gondola amid a bowing crowd. All was stirring life, yet all was silent; the fantastic architecture, the glowing sky, the flitting gondolas, and the brilliant crowd gliding about with noiseless step, this city without sound, it seemed a dream!

CHAPTER LXVI.

Anxiety.

THE ambassador had engaged for Lady Annabel a palace on the Grand Canal, belonging to Count Manfrini. It was a structure of great size and magnificence, and rose out of the water with a flight of marble steps. Within was a vast gallery, lined with statues and busts on tall pedestals; suites of spacious apartments, with marble floors and hung with satin; ceilings painted by Tintoretto and full of Turkish trophies; furniture alike sumptuous and massy; the gilding, although of two hundred years' duration, as bright and burnished as if it had but yesterday been touched with the brush; sequin gold, as the Venetians tell you to this day with pride. But even their old furniture will soon not be left to them, as palaces are now daily broken up like old ships, and their colossal spoils consigned to Hanway Yard and Bond Street, whence re-burnished and vamped up, their Titantic proportions in time appropriately figure in the boudoirs of May Fair and the miniature saloons of St. James'. Many a fine lady now sits in a doge's chair, and many a dandy listens to his doom from a

couch that has already witnessed the less inexorable decrees of the Council of Ten.

Amid all this splendour, however, one mournful idea alone pervaded the tortured consciousness of Lady Annabel Herbert. Daily the dark truth stole upon her with increased conviction, that Venetia had come hither only to die. There seemed to the agitated ear of this distracted mother a terrible omen even in the very name of her child; and she could not resist the persuasion that her final destiny would, in some degree, be connected with her fanciful appellation. The physicians, for hopeless as Lady Annabel could not resist esteeming their interference, Venetia was now surrounded with physicians, shook their heads, prescribed different remedies and gave contrary opinions; each day, however, their patient became more languid, thinner and more thin, until she seemed like a beautiful spirit gliding into the saloon, leaning on her mother's arm, and followed by Pauncefort, who had now learnt the fatal secret from her mistress, and whose heart was indeed almost broken at the prospect of the calamity that was impending over them.

At Padua, Lady Annabel, in her mortified reveries, outraged as she conceived by her husband, and anxious about her daughter, had schooled herself into visiting her fresh calamities on the head of the unhappy Herbert, to whose intrusion and irresistible influence she ascribed all the illness of her child; but, as the indisposition of Venetia gradually, but surely, increased, until at length it assumed so alarming an aspect that Lady Annabel, in the distraction of her mind, could no longer refrain from contemplating the most fatal result, she had taught herself bitterly to

regret the failure of that approaching reconciliation which now she could not but believe would, at least, have secured her the life of Venetia. Whatever might be the risk of again uniting herself with her husband, whatever might be the mortification and misery which it might ultimately, or even speedily, entail upon her, there was no unhappiness that she could herself experience, which for one moment she could put in competition with the existence of her child. When that was the question, every feeling that had hitherto impelled her conduct assumed a totally different complexion. That conduct, in her view, had been a systematic sacrifice of self to secure the happiness of her daughter; and the result of all her exertions was, that not only her happiness was destroyed, but her life was fast vanishing away. To save Venetia, it now appeared to Lady Annabel that there was no extremity which she would not endure; and if it came to a question whether Venetia should survive, or whether she should even be separated from her mother, her maternal heart now assured her that she would not for an instant hesitate in preferring an eternal separation to the death of her child. Her terror now worked to such a degree upon her character, that she even, at times, half resolved to speak to Venetia upon the subject, and contrive some method of communicating her wishes to her father; but pride, the habitual repugnance of so many years to converse upon the topic, mingled also, as should be confessed, with an indefinite apprehension of the ill consequences of a conversation of such a character on the nervous temperament of her daughter, restrained her.

'My love!' said Lady Annabel, one day to her daughter, 'do you think you could go out? The phy-

sicians think it of great importance that you should attempt to exert yourself, however slightly.'

'Dear mother, if anything could annoy me from your lips, it would be to hear you quote these physicians,' said Venetia. 'Their daily presence and inquiries irritate me. Let me be at peace. I wish to see no one but you.'

'But Venetia,' said Lady Annabel, in a voice of great emotion, 'Venetia——,' and here she paused; 'think of my anxiety.'

'Dear mother, it would be ungrateful for me ever to forget that. But you, and you alone, know that my state, whatever it may be, and to whatever it may be I am reconciled, is not produced by causes over which these physicians have any control, over which no one has control——now,' added Venetia, in a tone of great mournfulness.

For here we must remark that so inexperienced was Venetia in the feelings of others, and so completely did she judge of the strength and purity of their emotions from her own, that reflection, since the terrible adventure of Rovigo, had only convinced her that it was no longer in her mother's power to unite herself again with her other parent. She had taught herself to look upon her father's burst of feeling towards Lady Annabel as the momentary and inevitable result of a meeting so unexpected and overpowering, but she did not doubt that the stranger whose presence had ultimately so fatally clouded that interview of promise, possessed claims upon Marmion Herbert which he would neither break, nor, upon reflection, be desirous to question. It was then the conviction that a reconciliation between her parents was now impossible, in which her despair originated, and she

pictured to herself her father once more at Arquâ disturbed, perhaps, for a day or two, as he naturally must be, by an interview so sudden and so harassing; shedding a tear, perhaps, in secret to the wife whom he had injured, and the child whom he had scarcely seen; but relapsing, alike from the force of habit and inclination, into those previous and confirmed feelings, under whose influence, she was herself a witness, his life had been so serene, and even so laudable. She was confirmed in these opinions by the circumstance of their never having heard since from him. Placed in his situation, if indeed an irresistible influence were not controlling him, would he have hesitated for a moment to have prevented even their departure, or to have pursued them; to have sought at any rate some means of communicating with them? He was plainly reconciled to his present position, and felt that under these circumstances silence on his part was alike kindest and most discreet. Venetia had ceased, therefore, to question the justice or the expediency, or even the abstract propriety, of her mother's conduct. She viewed their condition now as the result of stern necessity. She pitied her mother, and for herself she had no hope.

There was then much meaning in that little monosyllable with which Venetia concluded her reply to her mother. She had no hope 'now.' Lady Annabel, however, ascribed it to a very different meaning; she only believed that her daughter was of opinion that nothing would induce her now to listen to the overtures of her father. Prepared for any sacrifice of self, Lady Annabel replied, 'But there is hope, Venetia; when your life is in question, there is nothing that should not be done.'

'Nothing can be done,' said Venetia, who, of course, could not dream of what was passing in her mother's mind.

Lady Annabel rose from her seat and walked to the window; apparently her eye watched only the passing gondolas, but indeed she saw them not; she saw only her child stretched perhaps on the couch of death.

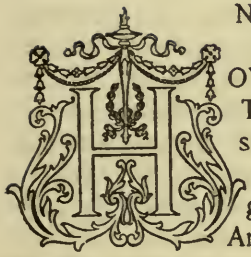
'We quitted Rovigo too hastily, perhaps,' said Lady Annabel, in a choking voice, and with a face of scarlet. It was a terrible struggle, but the words were uttered.

'No, mother,' said Venetia, to Lady Annabel's inexpressible surprise, 'we did right to go.'

'Even my child, even Venetia, with all her devotion to him, feels the absolute necessity of my conduct,' thought Lady Annabel. Her pride returned; she felt the impossibility of making an overture to Herbert; she looked upon their daughter as the last victim of his fatal career.

CHAPTER LXVII.

Night in Venice.



OW beautiful is night in Venice! Then music and the moon reign supreme; the glittering sky reflected in the waters, and every gondola gliding with sweet sounds! Around on every side are palaces and temples, rising from the waves which they shadow with their solemn forms, their costly fronts rich with the spoils of kingdoms, and softened with the magic of the midnight beam. The whole city, too, is poured forth for festival. The people lounge on the quays and cluster on the bridges; the light barks skim along in crowds, just touching the surface of the water, while their bright prows of polished iron gleam in the moonshine, and glitter in the rippling wave. Not a sound that is not graceful: the tinkle of guitars, the sighs of serenaders, and the responsive chorus of gondoliers. Now and then a laugh, light, joyous, and yet musical, bursts forth from some illuminated coffee-house, before which a buffo disports, a tumbler stands on his head, or a juggler mystifies; and all for a sequin!

The Place of St. Marc, at the period of our story, still presented the most brilliant spectacle of the kind

in Europe. Not a spot was more distinguished for elegance, luxury, and enjoyment. It was indeed the inner shrine of the temple of pleasure, and very strange and amusing would be the annals of its picturesque arcades. We must not, however, step behind their blue awnings, but content ourselves with the exterior scene; and certainly the Place of St. Marc, with the variegated splendour of its Christian mosque, the ornate architecture of its buildings, its diversified population, a tribute from every shore of the midland sea, and where the noble Venetian, in his robe of crimson silk, and long white peruque, might be jostled by the Sclavonian with his target, and the Albanian in his kilt, while the Turk, sitting cross-legged on his Persian carpet, smoked his long chibouque with serene gravity, and the mild Armenian glided by him with a low reverence, presented an aspect under a Venetian moon such as we shall not easily find again in Christendom, and, in spite of the dying glory and the neighbouring vice, was pervaded with an air of romance and refinement, compared with which the glittering dissipation of Paris, even in its liveliest and most graceful hours, assumes a character alike coarse and commonplace.

It is the hour of love and of faro; now is the hour to press your suit and to break a bank; to glide from the apartment of rapture into the chamber of chance. Thus a noble Venetian contrived to pass the night in alternations of excitement that in general left him sufficiently serious for the morrow's council. For more vulgar tastes there was the minstrel, the conjurer, and the story-teller, goblets of Cyprus wine, flasks of sherbert, and confectionery that dazzled like diamonds. And for every one, from the grave senator

to the gay gondolier, there was in the atmosphere itself a spell, which, after all, has more to do with human happiness than all the accidents of fortune and all the arts of government.

Amid this gay and brilliant multitude, one human being stood alone. Muffled in his cloak, and leaning against a column in the portico of St. Marc, an expression of oppressive care and affliction was imprinted on his countenance, and ill accorded with the light and festive scene. Had he been crossed in love, or had he lost at play? Was it woman or gold to which his anxiety and sorrow were attributable, for under one or other of these categories, undoubtedly, all the miseries of man may range. Want of love or want of money lies at the bottom of all our griefs.

The stranger came forward, and leaving the joyous throng, turned down the Piazzetta, and approached the quay of the Lagune. A gondolier saluted him, and he entered his boat.

'Whither, signor?' said the gondolier.

'To the Grand Canal,' he replied.

Over the moonlit wave the gondola swiftly skimmed! The scene was a marvellous contrast to the one which the stranger had just quitted; but it brought no serenity to his care-worn countenance, though his eye for a moment kindled as he looked upon the moon, that was sailing in the cloudless heaven with a single star by her side.

They had soon entered the Grand Canal, and the gondolier looked to his employer for instructions. 'Row opposite to the Manfrini palace,' said the stranger, 'and rest upon your oar.'

The blinds of the great window of the palace were withdrawn. Distinctly might be recognised a

female figure bending over the recumbent form of a girl. An hour passed away and still the gondola was motionless, and still the silent stranger gazed on the inmates of the palace. A servant now came forward and closed the curtain of the chamber. The stranger sighed, and waving his hand to the gondolier, bade him return to the Lagune.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

The Monk's Message.

T IS curious to recall our feelings at a moment when a great event is impending over us, and we are utterly unconscious of its probable occurrence. How often does it happen that a subject which almost unceasingly engages our mind, is least thought of at the very instant that the agitating suspense involved in its consideration is perhaps about to be terminated for ever! The very morning after the mysterious gondola had rested so long before the Manfrini Palace, Venetia rose for the first time since the flight from Rovigo, refreshed by her slumbers, and tranquil in her spirit. It was not in her power to recall her dreams; but they had left a vague and yet serene impression. There seemed a lightness in her heart that long had been unusual with her, and she greeted her mother with a smile, faint indeed, yet natural.

Perhaps this beneficial change, slight but still delightful, might be attributed to the softness and the splendour of the morn. Before the approach of winter, it seemed that the sun was resolved to remind

the Venetians that they were his children; and that, although his rays might be soon clouded for a season, they were not to believe that their parent had deserted them. The sea was like glass, a golden haze suffused the horizon, and a breeze, not strong enough to disturb the waters, was wafted at intervals from the gardens of the Brenta, fitful and sweet.

Venetia had yielded to the suggestion of her mother, and had agreed for the first time to leave the palace. They stepped into their gondola, and were wafted to an island in the Lagune where there was a convent, and, what in Venice was more rare and more delightful, a garden. Its scanty shrubberies sparkled in the sun; and a cypress flanked by a pine-tree offered to the eye unused to trees a novel and picturesque group. Beneath its shade they rested, watching on one side the distant city, and on the other the still and gleaming waters of the Adriatic. While they were thus sitting, renovated by the soft air and pleasant spectacle, a holy father, with a beard like a meteor, appeared and addressed them.

'Welcome to St. Lazaro!' said the holy father, speaking in English; 'and may the peace that reigns within its walls fill also your breasts!'

'Indeed, holy father,' said Lady Annabel to the Armenian monk, 'I have long heard of your virtues and your happy life.'

'You know that Paradise was placed in our country,' said the monk with a smile. 'We have all lost Paradise, but the Armenian has lost his country too. Nevertheless, with God's blessing, on this islet we have found an Eden, pure at least and tranquil.'

'For the pious, Paradise exists everywhere,' said Lady Annabel.

'You have been in England, holy father?' said Venetia.

'It has not been my good fortune,' replied the monk.

'Yet you speak our tongue with a facility and accent that surprise me.'

'I learnt it in America where I long resided,' rejoined the Armenian.

'This is for your eye, lady,' continued the monk, drawing a letter from his bosom.

Lady Annabel felt not a little surprised; but the idea immediately occurred to her that it was some conventual memorial appealing to her charity. She took the paper from the monk, who immediately moved away; but what was the agitation of Lady Annabel when she recognised the handwriting of her husband! Her first thought was to save Venetia from sharing that agitation. She rose quickly; she commanded herself sufficiently to advise her daughter, in a calm tone, to remain seated, while for a moment she refreshed herself by a stroll. She had not quitted Venetia many paces, when she broke the seal and read these lines:

'Tremble not, Annabel, when you recognise this handwriting. It is that of one whose only aspiration is to contribute to your happiness; and although the fulfilment of that fond desire may be denied him, it never shall be said, even by you, that any conduct of his should now occasion you annoyance. I am in Venice at the peril of my life, which I only mention because the difficulties inseparable from my position are the principal cause that you did not receive this communication immediately after our strange meeting.

I have gazed at night upon your palace, and watched the forms of my wife and our child; but one word from you, and I quit Venice for ever, and it shall not be my fault if you are ever again disturbed by the memory of the miserable Herbert.

'But before I go, I will make this one appeal if not to your justice, at least to your mercy. After the fatal separation of a life, we have once more met: you have looked upon me not with hatred; my hand has once more pressed yours; for a moment I indulged the impossible hope, that this weary and exhausted spirit might at length be blessed. With agony I allude to the incident that dispelled the rapture of this vision. Sufficient for me most solemnly to assure you that four-and-twenty hours had not elapsed without that feeble and unhallowed tie being severed for ever! It vanished instantaneously before the presence of my wife and my child. However you decide, it can never again subsist: its utter and eternal dissolution was the inevitable homage to your purity.

'Whatever may have been my errors, whatever my crimes, for I will not attempt to justify to you a single circumstance of my life, I humble myself in the dust before you, and solicit only mercy; yet whatever may have been my career, ah! Annabel, in the infinite softness of your soul was it not for a moment pardoned? Am I indeed to suffer for that last lamentable intrusion? You are a woman, Annabel, with a brain as clear as your heart is pure. Judge me with calmness, Annabel; were there no circumstances in my situation to extenuate that deplorable connection? I will not urge them; I will not even intimate them; but surely, Annabel, when I kneel before you full of deep repentance and long remorse, if you could par-

don the past, it is not that incident, however mortifying to you, however disgraceful to myself, that should be an impassable barrier to all my hopes!

'Once you loved me; I ask you not to love me now. There is nothing about me now that can touch the heart of woman. I am old before my time; bent with the blended influence of action and of thought, and of physical and moral suffering. The play of my spirit has gone for ever. My passions have expired like my hopes. The remaining sands of my life are few. Once it was otherwise: you can recall a different picture of the Marmion on whom you smiled, and of whom you were the first love. O Annabel! grey, feeble, exhausted, penitent, let me stagger over your threshold, and die! I ask no more; I will not hope for your affection; I will not even count upon your pity; but endure my presence; let your roof screen my last days!'

It was read; it was read again, dim as was the sight of Lady Annabel with fast-flowing tears. Still holding the letter, but with hands fallen, she gazed upon the shining waters before her in a fit of abstraction. It was the voice of her child that roused her.

'Mother,' said Venetia in a tone of some decision, 'you are troubled, and we have only one cause of trouble. That letter is from my father.'

Lady Annabel gave her the letter in silence.

Venetia withdrew almost unconsciously a few paces from her mother. She felt this to be the crisis of her life. There never was a moment which she believed required more fully the presence of all her energies. Before she had addressed Lady Annabel, she had endeavoured to steel her mind to great exertion. Yet

now that she held the letter, she could not command herself sufficiently to read it. Her breath deserted her; her hand lost its power; she could not even open the lines on which perhaps her life depended. Suddenly, with a rapid effort, she glanced at the contents. The blood returned to her cheek; her eye became bright with excitement; she gasped for breath; she advanced to Lady Annabel. 'Ah! mother,' she exclaimed, 'you will grant all that it desires!'

Still gazing on the wave that laved the shore of the island with an almost imperceptible ripple, Lady Annabel continued silent.

'Mother,' said Venetia, 'my beloved mother, you hesitate.' She approached Lady Annabel, and with one arm round her neck, she grasped with the other her mother's hand. 'I implore you, by all that affection which you lavish on me, yield to this supplication. O mother! dearest mother! it has been my hope that my life has been at least a life of duty; I have laboured to yield to all your wishes. I have struggled to make their fulfilment the law of my being. Yes! mother, your memory will assure you that when the sweetest emotions of my heart were the stake, you appealed to me to sacrifice them, and they were dedicated to your will. Have I ever murmured? I have sought only to repay your love by obedience. Speak to me, dearest mother! I implore you, speak to me! Tell me, can you ever repent relenting in this instance? O mother! you will not hesitate; you will not indeed; you will bring joy and content to our long-harassed hearth! Tell me so; I beseech you tell me so! I wish, oh! how I wish, that you would comply from the mere impulse of your own heart! But, grant that it is a sacrifice;

grant that it may be unwise; that it may be vain; I supplicate you to make it! I, your child, who never deserted you, who will never desert you, pledging my faith to you in the face of heaven; for my sake, I supplicate you to make it. You do not hesitate; you cannot hesitate; mother, you cannot hesitate. Ah! you would not if you knew all; if you knew all the misery of my life, you would be glad; you would be cheerful; you would look upon this as an interposition of Providence in favour of your Venetia; you would, indeed, dear mother!'

'What evil fortune guided our steps to Italy?' said Lady Annabel in a solemn tone, and as if in soliloquy.

'No, no, mother; not evil fortune; fortune the best and brightest,' exclaimed her daughter. 'We came here to be happy, and happiness we have at length gained. It is in our grasp; I feel it. It was not fortune, dear mother! it was fate, it was Providence, it was God. You have been faithful to Him, and He has brought back to you my father, chastened and repentant. God has turned his heart to all your virtues. Will you desert him? No, no, mother, you will not, you cannot; for his sake, for your own sake, and for your child's, you will not!'

'For twenty years I have acted from an imperious sense of duty,' said Lady Annabel, 'and for your sake, Venetia, as much as for my own. Shall the feelings of a moment——'

'O mother! dearest mother! say not these words. With me, at least, it has not been the feeling of a moment. It haunted my infancy; it harassed me while a girl; it has brought me in the prime of womanhood to the brink of the grave. And with

you, mother, has it been the feeling of a moment? Ah! you ever loved him, when his name was never breathed by those lips. You loved him when you deemed he had forgotten you; when you pictured him to yourself in all the pride of health and genius, wanton and daring; and now, now that he comes to you penitent, perhaps dying, more like a remorseful spirit than a breathing being, and humbles himself before you, and appeals only to your mercy, ah! my mother, you cannot reject, you could not reject him, even if you were alone, even if you had no child!'

'My child! my child! all my hopes were in my child,' murmured Lady Annabel.

'Is she not by your side?' said Venetia.

'You know not what you ask; you know not what you counsel,' said Lady Annabel. 'It has been the prayer and effort of my life that you should never know. There is a bitterness in the reconciliation which follows long estrangement, that yields a pang more acute even than the first disunion. Shall I be called upon to mourn over the wasted happiness of twenty years? Why did he not hate us?'

'The pang is already felt, mother,' said Venetia. 'Reject my father, but you cannot resume the feelings of a month back. You have seen him; you have listened to him. He is no longer the character which justified your conduct, and upheld you under the trial. His image has entered your soul; your heart is softened. Bid him quit Venice without seeing you, and you will remain the most miserable of women.'

'On his head, then, be the final desolation,' said Lady Annabel; 'it is but a part of the lot that he has yielded me.'

'I am silent,' said Venetia, relaxing her grasp. 'I

see that your child is not permitted to enter into your considerations.' She turned away.

'Venetia,' said her mother.

'Mother!' said Venetia, looking back, but not returning.

'Return one moment to me.'

Venetia slowly rejoined her. Lady Annabel spoke in a kind and gentle, though serious tone.

'Venetia,' she said, 'what I am about to speak is not the impulse of the moment, but has been long revolved in my mind; do not, therefore, misapprehend it. I express without passion what I believe to be truth. I am persuaded that the presence of your father is necessary to your happiness; nay, more, to your life. I recognise the mysterious influence which he has ever exercised over your existence. I feel it impossible for me any longer to struggle against a power to which I bow. Be happy, then, my daughter, and live. Fly to your father, and be to him as matchless a child as you have been to me.' She uttered these last words in a choking voice.

'Is this, indeed, the dictate of your calm judgment, mother?' said Venetia.

'I call God to witness, it has of late been more than once on my lips. The other night, when I spoke of Rovigo, I was about to express this.'

'Then, mother!' said Venetia, 'I find that I have been misunderstood. At least I thought my feelings towards yourself had been appreciated. They have not; and I can truly say, my life does not afford a single circumstance to which I can look back with content. Well will it indeed be for me to die!'

'The dream of my life,' said Lady Annabel, in a tone of infinite distress, 'was that she, at least,

should never know unhappiness. It was indeed a dream.'

There was now a silence of several minutes. Lady Annabel remained in exactly the same position, Venetia standing at a little distance from her, looking resigned and sorrowful.

'Venetia,' at length said Lady Annabel, 'why are you silent?'

'Mother, I have no more to say. I pretend not to act in this life; it is my duty to follow you.'

'And your inclination?' inquired Lady Annabel.

'I have ceased to have a wish upon any subject,' said Venetia.

'Venetia,' said Lady Annabel, with a great effort, 'I am miserable.'

This unprecedented confession of suffering from the strong mind of her mother, melted Venetia to the heart. She advanced, and threw her arms round her mother's neck, and buried her weeping face in Lady Annabel's bosom.

'Speak to me, my daughter,' said Lady Annabel; 'counsel me, for my mind trembles; anxiety has weakened it. Nay, I beseech you, speak. Speak, speak, Venetia. What shall I do?'

'Mother, I will never say anything again but that I love you!'

'I see the holy father in the distance. Let us walk to him, my child, and meet him.'

Accordingly Lady Annabel, now leaning on Venetia, approached the monk. About five minutes elapsed before they reached him, during which not a word was spoken.

'Holy father,' said Lady Annabel, in a tone of firmness that surprised her daughter and made her

tremble with anticipation, 'you know the writer of this letter?'

'He is my friend of many years, lady,' replied the Armenian; 'I knew him in America. I owe to him my life, and more than my life. There breathes not his equal among men.'

A tear started to the eye of Lady Annabel; she recalled the terms in which the household at Arquâ had spoken of Herbert. 'He is in Venice?' she inquired.

'He is within these walls,' the monk replied.

Venetia, scarcely able to stand, felt her mother start. After a momentary pause, Lady Annabel said, 'Can I speak with him, and alone?'

Nothing but the most nervous apprehension of throwing any obstacle in the way of the interview could have sustained Venetia. Quite pale, with her disengaged hand clenched, not a word escaped her lips. She hung upon the answer of the monk.

'You can see him, and alone,' said the monk. 'He is now in the sacristy. Follow me.'

'Venetia,' said Lady Annabel, 'remain in this garden. I will accompany this holy man. Stop! embrace me before I go, and,' she added, in a whisper, 'pray for me.'

It needed not the admonition of her mother to induce Venetia to seek refuge in prayer, in this agony of her life. But for its salutary and stilling influence, it seemed to her that she must have forfeited all control over her mind. The suspense was too terrible for human aid to support her. Seated by the seaside, she covered her face with her hands, and invoked the Supreme assistance. More than an hour passed away. Venetia looked up. Two beautiful

birds, of strange form and spotless plumage, that perhaps had wandered from the Ægean, were hovering over her head, bright and glancing in the sun. She accepted their appearance as a good omen. At this moment she heard a voice, and, looking up, observed a monk in the distance, beckoning to her. She rose, and with a trembling step approached him. He retired, still motioning to her to follow him. She entered, by a low portal, a dark cloister; it led to an ante-chapel, through which, as she passed, her ear caught the solemn chorus of the brethren. Her step faltered; her sight was clouded; she was as one walking in a dream. The monk opened a door, and, retiring, waved his hand, as for her to enter. There was a spacious and lofty chamber, scantily furnished, some huge chests, and many sacred garments. At the extreme distance her mother was reclined on a bench, her head supported by a large crimson cushion and her father kneeling by her mother's side. With a soundless step, and not venturing even to breathe, Venetia approached them, and, she knew not how, found herself embraced by both her parents.

CHAPTER LXIX.

Spring in the Apennines.

IN A green valley of the Apennines, close to the sea-coast between Genoa and Spezzia, is a marine villa that once belonged to the Malaspina family, in olden time the friends and patrons of Dante. It is rather a fantastic pile, painted in fresco, but spacious, in good repair, and convenient. Although little more than a mile from Spezzia, a glimpse of the blue sea can only be caught from one particular spot, so completely is the land locked with hills, covered with groves of chestnut and olive orchards. From the heights, however, you enjoy magnificent prospects of the most picturesque portion of the Italian coast; a lofty, undulating, and wooded shore, with an infinite variety of bays and jutting promontories; while the eye, wandering from Leghorn on one side towards Genoa on the other, traces an almost uninterrupted line of hamlets and casinos, gardens and orchards, terraces of vines, and groves of olive. Beyond them, the broad and blue expanse of the midland ocean, glittering in the meridian blaze, or about to receive perhaps in its glowing waters the red orb of sunset.

It was the month of May — in Italy, at least, the merry month of May, — and Marmion Herbert came forth from the villa Malaspina, and throwing himself on the turf, was soon lost in the volume of Plato which he bore with him. He did not move until in the course of an hour he was roused by the arrival of servants, who brought seats and a table, when looking up, he observed Lady Annabel and Venetia in the portico of the villa. He rose to greet them, and gave his arm to his wife.

'Spring in the Apennines, my Annabel,' said Herbert, 'is a happy combination. I am more in love each day with this residence. The situation is so sheltered, the air so soft and pure, the spot so tranquil, and the season so delicious, that it realises all my romance of retirement. As for you, I never saw you look so well; and as for Venetia, I can scarcely believe this rosy nymph could have been our pale-eyed girl, who cost us such anxiety!'

'Our breakfast is not ready. Let us walk to our sea view,' said Lady Annabel. 'Give me your book to carry, Marmion.'

'There let the philosopher repose,' said Herbert, throwing the volume on the turf. 'Plato dreamed of what I enjoy.'

'And of what did Plato dream, papa?' said Venetia.

'He dreamed of love, child.'

Venetia took her father's disengaged arm.

They had now arrived at their sea view, a glimpse of the Mediterranean between two tall crags.

'A sail in the offing,' said Herbert. 'How that solitary sail tells, Annabel!'

'I feel the sea breeze, mother. Does not it remind you of Weymouth?' said Venetia.

'Ah! Marmion,' said Lady Annabel, 'I would that you could see Masham once more. He is the only friend that I regret.'

'He prospers, Annabel; let that be our consolation: I have at least not injured him.'

They turned their steps; their breakfast was now prepared. The sun had risen above the hill beneath whose shade they rested, and the opposite side of the valley sparkled in light. It was a cheerful scene. 'I have a passion for living in the air,' said Herbert; 'I always envied the shepherds in Don Quixote. One of my youthful dreams was living among mountains of rosemary, and drinking only goat's milk. After breakfast I will read you Don Quixote's description of the golden age. I have often read it until the tears came into my eyes.'

'We must fancy ourselves in Spain,' said Lady Annabel; 'it is not difficult in this wild green valley; and if we have not rosemary, we have scents as sweet. Nature is our garden here, Venetia; and I do not envy even the statues and cypresses of our villa of the lake.'

'We must make a pilgrimage some day to the Maggiore, Annabel,' said Herbert. 'It is hallowed ground to me now.'

Their meal was finished, the servants brought their work, and books, and drawings; and Herbert, resuming his natural couch, re-opened his Plato, but Venetia ran into the villa, and returned with a volume. 'You must read us the golden age, papa,' she said, as she offered him, with a smile, his favourite Don Quixote.

'You must fancy the Don, looking earnestly upon a handful of acorns,' said Herbert, opening the book,

'while he exclaims, "O happy age! which our first parents called the age of gold! not because gold, so much adored in this iron age, was then easily purchased, but because those two fatal words, *meum* and *tuum,* were distinctions unknown to the people of those fortunate times; for all things were in common in that holy age: men, for their sustenance, needed only to lift their hands, and take it from the sturdy oak, whose spreading arms liberally invited them to gather the wholesome savoury fruit; while the clear springs, and silver rivulets, with luxuriant plenty, afforded them their pure refreshing water. In hollow trees, and in the clefts of rocks, the labouring and industrious bees erected their little commonwealths, that men might reap with pleasure and with ease the sweet and fertile harvest of their toils. The tough and strenuous cork-trees did, of themselves, and without other art than their native liberality, dismiss and impart their broad light bark, which served to cover those lowly huts, propped up with rough-hewn stakes, that were first built as a shelter against the inclemencies of the air.

'"All then was union, all peace, all love and friendship in the world. As yet no rude ploughshare presumed with violence to pry into the pious bowels of our mother earth, for she without compulsion kindly yielded from every part of her fruitful and spacious bosom, whatever might at once satisfy, sustain, and indulge her frugal children. Then was the time when innocent, beautiful young shepherdesses went tripping over the hills and vales; their lovely hair sometimes plaited, sometimes loose and flowing, clad in no other vestment but what the modesty of nature might require. The Tyrian dye, the rich glossy

hue of silk, martyred and dissembled into every colour, which are now esteemed so fine and magnificent, were unknown to the innocent simplicity of that age; yet, bedecked with more becoming leaves and flowers, they outshone the proudest of the vain-dressing ladies of our times, arrayed in the most magnificent garbs and all the most sumptuous adornings which idleness and luxury have taught succeeding pride. Lovers then expressed the passion of their souls in the unaffected language of the heart, with the native plainness and sincerity in which they were conceived, and divested of all that artificial contexture which enervates what it labours to enforce. Imposture, deceit, and malice had not yet crept in, and imposed themselves unbribed upon mankind in the disguise of truth: justice, unbiassed either by favour or interest, which now so fatally pervert it, was equally and impartially dispensed; nor was the judge's fancy law, for then there were neither judges nor causes to be judged. The modest maid might then walk alone. But, in this degenerate age, fraud and a legion of ills infecting the world, no virtue can be safe, no honour be secure; while wanton desires, diffused into the hearts of men, corrupt the strictest watches and the closest retreats, which, though as intricate and unknown as the labyrinth of Crete, are no security for chastity.

'"Thus, that primitive innocence being vanished, the oppression daily prevailing, there was a necessity to oppose the torrent of violence; for which reason the order of knighthood errant was instituted, to defend the honour of virgins, protect widows, relieve orphans, and assist all that are distressed. Now I myself am one of this order, honest friends, and though all people are obliged by the law of nature to

be kind to persons of my character, yet since you, without knowing anything of this obligation, have so generously entertained me, I ought to pay you my utmost acknowledgment, and accordingly return you my most hearty thanks."'

'There,' said Herbert, as he closed the book. 'In my opinion, Don Quixote was the best man that ever lived.'

'But he did not ever live,' said Lady Annabel, smiling.

'He lives to us,' said Herbert. 'He is the same to this age as if he had absolutely wandered over the plains of Castile and watched in the Sierra Morena. We cannot, indeed, find his tomb; but he has left us his great example. In his hero, Cervantes has given us the picture of a great and benevolent philosopher, and in his Sancho, a complete personification of the world, selfish and cunning, and yet overawed by the genius that he cannot comprehend: alive to all the material interests of existence, yet sighing after the ideal; securing his four young foals of the she-ass, yet indulging in dreams of empire.'

'But what do you think of the assault on the windmills, Marmion?' said Lady Annabel.

'In the outset of his adventures, as in the outset of our lives, he was misled by his enthusiasm,' replied Herbert, 'without which, after all, we can do nothing. But the result is, Don Quixote was a redresser of wrongs, and therefore the world esteemed him mad.'

In this vein, now conversing, now occupied with their pursuits, and occasionally listening to some passage which Herbert called to their attention, and which ever served as the occasion for some critical

remarks, always as striking from their originality as they were happy in their expression, the freshness of the morning disappeared; the sun now crowned the valley with his meridian beam, and they re-entered the villa. The ladies returned to their cool saloon, and Herbert to his study.

It was there he amused himself by composing the following lines:

SPRING IN THE APENNINES.

I.

Spring in the Apennines now holds her court
Within an amphitheatre of hills,
Clothed with the blooming chestnut; musical
With murmuring pines, waving their light green cones
Like youthful Bacchants; while the dewy grass,
The myrtle and the mountain violet,
Blend their rich odours with the fragrant trees,
And sweeten the soft air. Above us spreads
The purple sky, bright with the unseen sun
The hills yet screen, although the golden beam
Touches the topmost boughs, and tints with light
The grey and sparkling crags. The breath of morn
Still lingers in the valley; but the bee
With restless passion hovers on the wing,
Waiting the opening flower, of whose embrace
The sun shall be the signal. Poised in air,
The wingèd minstrel of the liquid dawn,
The lark, pours forth his lyric, and responds
To the fresh chorus of the sylvan doves,
The stir of branches and the fall of streams,
The harmonies of nature!

II.

Gentle Spring!
Once more, oh, yes! once more I feel thy breath,
And charm of renovation! To the sky

Thou bringest light, and to the glowing earth
A garb of grace: but sweeter than the sky
That hath no cloud, and sweeter than the earth
With all its pageantry, the peerless boon
Thou bearest to me, a temper like thine own;
A springlike spirit, beautiful and glad!
Long years, long years of suffering, and of thought
Deeper than woe, had dimmed the eager eye
Once quick to catch thy brightness, and the ear
That lingered on thy music, the harsh world
Had jarred. The freshness of my life was gone,
And hope no more an omen in thy bloom
Found of a fertile future! There are minds,
Like lands, but with one season, and that drear;
Mine was eternal winter!

III.

A dark dream
Of hearts estranged, and of an Eden lost
Entranced my being; one absorbing thought,
Which, if not torture, was a dull despair
That agony were light to. But while sad
Within the desert of my life I roamed,
And no sweet springs of love gushed forth to greet
My wearied heart, behold two spirits came
Floating in light, seraphic ministers,
The semblance of whose splendour on me fell
As on some dusky stream the matin ray,
Touching the gloomy waters with its life.
And both were fond, and one was merciful!
And to my home long forfeited they bore
My vagrant spirit, and the gentle hearth,
I reckless fled, received me with its shade
And pleasant refuge. And our softened hearts
Were like the twilight, when our very bliss
Calls tears to soothe our rapture; as the stars
Steal forth, then shining smiles their trembling ray
Mixed with our tenderness; and love was there
In all his manifold forms; the sweet embrace,

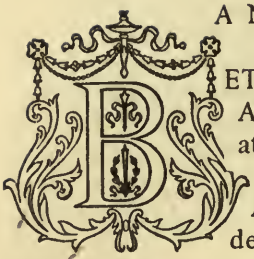
And thrilling pressure of the gentle hand,
And silence speaking with the melting eye!

IV.

And now again I feel thy breath, O Spring!
And now the seal hath fallen from my gaze,
And thy wild music in my ready ear
Finds a quick echo! The discordant world
Mars not thy melodies; thy blossoms now
Are emblems of my heart; and through my veins
The flow of youthful feeling, long pent up,
Glides like thy sunny streams! In this fair scene,
On forms still fairer I my blessing pour;
On her the beautiful, the wise, the good,
Who learnt the sweetest lesson — to forgive;
And on the bright-eyed daughter of our love,
Who soothed a mother, and a father saved!

CHAPTER LXX.

A Notable Meeting.



ETWEEN the reconciliation of Lady Annabel Herbert with her husband, at the Armenian convent at Venice, and the spring morning in the Apennines, which we have just described, half a year had intervened. The political position of Marmion Herbert rendered it impossible for him to remain in any city where there was a representative of his Britannic Majesty. Indeed, it was scarcely safe for him to be known out of America. He had quitted that country shortly after the struggle was over, chiefly from considerations for his health. His energies had been fast failing him; and a retired life and change of climate had been recommended by his physicians. His own feelings induced him to visit Italy, where he had once intended to pass his life, and where he now repaired to await death. Assuming a feigned name, and living in strict seclusion, it is probable that his presence would never have been discovered; or, if detected, would not have been noticed. Once more united with his wife, her personal influence at the court of St. James', and her powerful connections, might secure him from annoyance; and Venetia had

even indulged in a vague hope of returning to England. But Herbert could only have found himself again in his native country as a prisoner on parole. It would have been quite impossible for him to mix in the civil business of his native land, or enjoy any of the rights of citizenship. If a mild sovereign in his mercy had indeed accorded him a pardon, it must have been accompanied with rigorous and mortifying conditions; and his presence, in all probability, would have been confined to his country residence and its immediate neighbourhood. The pride of Lady Annabel herself recoiled from this sufferance; and although Herbert, keenly conscious of the sacrifice which a permanent estrangement from England entailed upon his wife and child, would have submitted to any restrictions, however humiliating, provided they were not inconsistent with his honour, it must be confessed that when he spoke of this painful subject to his wife, it was with no slight self-congratulation that he had found her resolution to remain abroad under any circumstances was fixed with her habitual decision. She communicated both to the Bishop of —— and to her brother the unexpected change that had occurred in her condition, and she had a reason to believe that a representation of what had happened would be made to the Royal family. Perhaps both the head of her house and her reverend friend anticipated that time might remove the barrier that presented itself to Herbert's immediate return to England; they confined their answers, however, to congratulations on the reconciliation, to their confidence in the satisfaction it would occasion her, and to the expression of their faithful friendship; and neither alluded to a result which both, if only for her sake, desired.

The Herberts had quitted Venice a few days after the meeting on the island of St. Lazaro; had travelled by slow journeys, crossing the Apennines, to Genoa; and only remained in that city until they engaged their present residence. It combined all the advantages which they desired: seclusion, beauty, comfort, and the mild atmosphere that Venetia had seemed to require. It was not, however, the genial air that had recalled the rose to Venetia's cheek and the sunny smile to her bright eye, or had inspired again that graceful form with all its pristine elasticity. It was a heart content; a spirit at length at peace. The contemplation of the happiness of those most dear to her that she hourly witnessed, and the blissful consciousness that her exertions had mainly contributed to, if not completely occasioned, all this felicity, were remedies of far more efficacy than all the consultations and prescriptions of her physicians. The conduct of her father repaid her for all her sufferings, and realised all her dreams of domestic tenderness and delight. Tender, grateful, and affectionate, Herbert hovered round her mother like a delicate spirit who had been released by some kind mortal from a tedious and revolting thraldom, and who believed he could never sufficiently testify his devotion. There was so much respect blended with his fondness, that the spirit of her mother was utterly subdued by his irresistible demeanour. All her sadness and reserve, her distrust and her fear, had vanished; and rising confidence mingling with the love she had ever borne to him, she taught herself even to seek his opinion, and be guided by his advice. She could not refrain, indeed, from occasionally feeling, in this full enjoyment of his

love, that she might have originally acted with too much precipitation; and that, had she only bent for a moment to the necessity of conciliation, and condescended to the excusable artifices of affection, their misery might have been prevented. Once, when they were alone, her softened heart would have confessed to Herbert this painful conviction, but he was too happy and too generous to permit her for a moment to indulge in such a remorseful retrospect. All the error, he insisted, was his own; and he had been fool enough to have wantonly forfeited a happiness which time and experience had now taught him to appreciate.

'We married too young, Marmion,' said his wife.

'It shall be that, then, love,' replied Herbert; 'but for all that I have suffered, I would not have avoided my fate on the condition of losing the exquisite present!'

It is perhaps scarcely necessary to remark that Herbert avoided with the most scrupulous vigilance the slightest allusion to any of those peculiar opinions for which he was, unhappily, too celebrated. Musing over the singular revolutions which had already occurred in his habits and his feelings towards herself, Lady Annabel, indeed, did not despair that his once self-sufficient soul might ultimately bow to that blessed faith which to herself had ever proved so great a support, and so exquisite a solace. It was, indeed, the inexpressible hope that lingered at the bottom of her heart; and sometimes she even indulged in the delightful fancy that his mild and penitent spirit had, by the gracious mercy of Providence, been already touched by the bright sunbeam of conviction. At all events, his subdued and chastened temperament was

no unworthy preparation for still greater blessings. It was this hallowed anticipation which consoled, and alone consoled, Lady Annabel for her own estrangement from the communion of her national church. Of all the sacrifices which her devotion to Herbert entailed upon her, this was the one which she felt most constantly and most severely. Not a day elapsed but the chapel at Cherbury rose before her; and when she remembered that neither herself nor her daughter might again kneel before the altar of their God, she almost trembled at the step which she had taken, and almost esteemed it a sacrifice of heavenly to earthly duty, which no consideration, perhaps, warranted. This apprehension, indeed, was the cloud in her life, and one which Venetia, who felt all its validity, found difficulty in combating.

Otherwise, when Venetia beheld her parents, she felt ethereal, and seemed to move in air; for her life, in spite of its apparent tranquillity, was to her all excitement. She never looked upon her father, or heard his voice, without a thrill. His society was as delightful as his heart was tender. It seemed to her that she could listen to him for ever. Every word he spoke was different from the language of other men; there was not a subject on which his richly-cultivated mind could not pour forth instantaneously a flood of fine fancies and deep intelligence. He seemed to have read every book in every language, and to have mused over every line he had read. She could not conceive how one, the tone of whose mind was so original that it suggested on every topic some conclusion that struck instantly by its racy novelty, could be so saturated with the learning and the views of other men. Although they lived in unbroken solitude, and were

almost always together, not a day passed that she did not find herself musing over some thought or expression of her father, which broke from his mind without effort, and as if by chance. Literature to Herbert was now only a source of amusement and engaging occupation. All thought of fame had long fled his soul. He cared not for being disturbed; and he would throw down his Plato for Don Quixote, or close his Æschylus and take up a volume of Madame de Sévigné without a murmur, if reminded by anything that occurred of a passage which might contribute to the amusement and instruction of his wife and daughter. Indeed, his only study now was to contribute to their happiness. For him they had given up their country and society, and he sought by his vigilant attention and his various accomplishments to render their hours as light and pleasant as, under such circumstances, was possible. His muse, too, was only dedicated to the celebration of any topic which their life or themselves suggested. He loved to lie under the trees, and pour forth sonnets to Lady Annabel; and encouraged Venetia, by the readiness and interest with which he invariably complied with her intimations, to throw out every fancy which occurred to her for his verse. A life passed without the intrusion of a single evil passion, without a single expression that was not soft, and graceful, and mild, and adorned with all the resources of a most accomplished and creative spirit, required not the distractions of society. It would have shrunk from it, from all its artificial excitement and vapid reaction. The days of the Herberts flowed on in one bright, continuous stream of love, and literature, and gentle pleasures. Beneath them was the green earth, above

them the blue sky. Their spirits were as clear, and their hearts as soft as the clime.

The hour of twilight was approaching, and the family were preparing for their daily walk. Their simple repast was finished, and Venetia held the verses which her father had written in the morning, and which he had presented to her.

'Let us descend to Spezzia,' said Herbert to Lady Annabel; 'I love an ocean sunset.'

Accordingly they proceeded through their valley to the craggy path which led down to the bay. After passing through a small ravine, the magnificent prospect opened before them. The sun was yet an hour above the horizon, and the sea was like a lake of molten gold; the colour of the sky nearest to the sun, of a pale green, with two or three burnished streaks of vapour, quite still, and so thin you could almost catch the sky through them, fixed, as it were, in this gorgeous frame. It was now a dead calm, but the sail that had been hovering the whole morning in the offing had made the harbour in time, and had just cast anchor near some coasting craft and fishing-boats, all that now remained where Napoleon had projected forming one of the arsenals of the world.

Tracing their way down a mild declivity, covered with spreading vineyards, and quite fragrant with the blossom of the vine, the Herberts proceeded through a wood of olives, and emerged on a terrace raised directly above the shore, leading to Spezzia, and studded here and there with rugged groups of aloes.

'I have often observed here,' said Venetia, 'about a mile out at sea—there, now, where I point—the

water rise. It is now a calm, and yet it is more troubled, I think, than usual. Tell me the cause, dear father, for I have often wished to know.'

'It passes my experience,' said Herbert; 'but here is an ancient fisherman; let us inquire of him.'

He was an old man, leaning against a rock, and smoking his pipe in contemplative silence; his face bronzed with the sun and the roughness of many seasons, and his grey hairs not hidden by his long blue cap. Herbert saluted him, and, pointing to the phenomenon, requested an explanation of it.

''Tis a fountain of fresh water, signor, that rises in our gulf,' said the old fisherman, 'to the height of twenty feet.'

'And is it constant?' inquired Herbert.

''Tis the same in sunshine and in storm, in summer and in winter, in calm or in breeze,' said the old fisherman.

'And has it always been so?'

'It came before my time.'

'A philosophic answer,' said Herbert, 'and deserves a paul. Mine was a crude question. Addio, good friend.'

'I should like to drink of that fountain of fresh water, Annabel,' said Herbert. 'There seems to me something wondrous fanciful in it. Some day we will row there. It shall be a calm like this.'

'We want a fountain in our valley,' said Lady Annabel.

'We do,' said Herbert; 'and I think we must make one; we must inquire at Genoa. I am curious in fountains. Our fountain should, I think, be classical; simple, compact, with a choice inscription, the altar of a Naiad.'

'And mamma shall make the design, and you shall write the inscription,' said Venetia.

'And you shall be the nymph, child,' said Herbert.

They were now within a bowshot of the harbour, and a jutting cliff of marble, more graceful from a contiguous bed of myrtles, invited them to rest, and watch the approaching sunset.

'Say what they like,' said Herbert, 'there is a spell in the shores of the Mediterranean Sea which no others can rival. Never was such a union of natural loveliness and magical associations! On these shores have risen all that interests us in the past: Egypt and Palestine, Greece, Rome, and Carthage, Moorish Spain, and feudal Italy. These shores have yielded us our religion, our arts, our literature, and our laws. If all that we have gained from the shores of the Mediterranean was erased from the memory of man, we should be savages. Will the Atlantic ever be so memorable? Its civilisation will be more rapid, but will it be as refined? and, far more important, will it be as permanent? Will it not lack the racy vigour and the subtle spirit of aboriginal genius? Will not a colonial character cling to its society, feeble, inanimate, evanescent? What America is deficient in is creative intellect. It has no nationality. Its intelligence has been imported, like its manufactured goods. Its inhabitants are a people, but are they a nation? I wish that the empire of the Incas and the kingdom of Montezuma had not been sacrificed. I wish that the republic of the Puritans had blended with the tribes of the wilderness.'

The red sun was now hovering over the horizon; it quivered for an instant, and then sank. Immediately the high and undulating coast was covered with

a crimson flush; the cliffs, the groves, the bays and jutting promontories, each straggling sail and tall white tower, suffused with a rosy light. Gradually that rosy tint became a bright violet, and then faded into purple. But the glory of the sunset long lingered in the glowing west, streaming with every colour of the Iris, while a solitary star glittered with silver light amid the shifting splendour.

'Hesperus rises from the sunset like the fountain of fresh water from the sea,' said Herbert. 'The sky and the ocean have two natures, like ourselves.'

At this moment the boat of the vessel, which had anchored about an hour back, put to shore.

'That seems an English brig,' said Herbert. 'I cannot exactly make out its trim; it scarcely seems a merchant vessel.'

The projection of the shore hid the boat from their sight as it landed. The Herberts rose, and proceeded towards the harbour. There were some rude steps cut in the rock which led from the immediate shore to the terrace. As they approached these, two gentlemen in sailors' jackets mounted suddenly. Lady Annabel and Venetia simultaneously started as they recognised Lord Cadurcis and his cousin. They were so close that neither party had time to prepare themselves. Venetia found her hand in that of Plantagenet, while Lady Annabel saluted George. Infinite were their mutual inquiries and congratulations, but it so happened that, with one exception, no name was mentioned. It was quite evident, however, to Herbert, that these were very familiar acquaintances of his family; for, in the surprise of the moment, Lord Cadurcis had saluted his daughter by her Christian name. There was no slight emotion, too, displayed

on all sides. Indeed, independently of the agitation which so unexpected a rencounter was calculated to produce, the presence of Herbert, after the first moments of recognition, not a little excited the curiosity of the young men, and in some degree occasioned the embarrassment of all. Who was this stranger, on whom Venetia and her mother were leaning with such fondness? He was scarcely too old to be the admirer of Venetia, and if there were a greater disparity of years between them than is usual, his distinguished appearance might well reconcile the lady to her lot, or even justify her choice. Had, then, Cadurcis again met Venetia only to find her the bride or the betrothed of another? a mortifying situation, even an intolerable one, if his feelings remained unchanged; and if the eventful year that had elapsed since they parted had not replaced her image in his susceptible mind by another more cherished, and, perhaps, less obdurate. Again, to Lady Annabel the moment was one of great awkwardness, for the introduction of her husband to those with whom she was recently so intimate, and who were then aware that the name of that husband was never even mentioned in her presence, recalled the painful past with a disturbing vividness. Venetia, indeed, did not share these feelings fully, but she thought it ungracious to anticipate her mother in the announcement.

The Herberts turned with Lord Cadurcis and his cousin; they were about to retrace their steps on the terrace, when Lady Annabel, taking advantage of the momentary silence, and summoning all her energy, with a pale cheek and a voice that slightly faltered, said, 'Lord Cadurcis, allow me to present you to Mr. Herbert, my husband,' she added with emphasis.

'Good God!' exclaimed Cadurcis, starting; and then, outstretching his hand, he contrived to add, 'have I indeed the pleasure of seeing one I have so long admired?'

'Lord Cadurcis!' exclaimed Herbert, scarcely less surprised. 'Is it Lord Cadurcis? This is a welcome meeting.'

Everyone present felt overwhelmed with confusion or astonishment; Lady Annabel sought refuge in presenting Captain Cadurcis to her husband. This ceremony, though little noticed even by those more immediately interested in it, nevertheless served, in some degree, as a diversion. Herbert, who was only astonished, was the first who rallied. Perhaps Lord Cadurcis was the only man in existence whom Herbert wished to know. He had read his works with deep interest; at least, those portions which foreign journals had afforded him. He was deeply impressed with his fame and genius; but what perplexed him at this moment, even more than his unexpected introduction to him, was the singular, the very extraordinary circumstance, that the name of their most celebrated countryman should never have escaped the lips either of his wife or his daughter, although they appeared, and Venetia especially, to be on terms with him of even domestic intimacy.

'You arrived here to-day, Lord Cadurcis?' said Herbert. 'From whence?'

'Immediately from Naples, where we last touched,' replied his lordship; 'but I have been residing at Athens.'

'I envy you,' said Herbert.

'It would be a fit residence for you,' said Lord Cadurcis. 'You were, however, in some degree, my

companion, for a volume of your poems was one of the few books I had with me. I parted with all the rest, but I retained that. It is in my cabin, and full of my scribblement. If you would condescend to accept it, I would offer it to you.'

Mr. Herbert and Lord Cadurcis maintained the conversation along the terrace. Venetia, by whose side her old companion walked, was quite silent. Once her eyes met those of Cadurcis; his expression of mingled archness and astonishment was irresistible. His cousin and Lady Annabel carried on a more suppressed conversation, but on ordinary topics. When they had reached the olive-grove Herbert said, 'Here lies our way homeward, my lord. If you and your cousin will accompany us, it will delight Lady Annabel and myself.'

'Nothing, I am sure, will give George and myself greater pleasure,' he replied. 'We had, indeed, no purpose when you met us but to enjoy our escape from imprisonment, little dreaming we should meet our kindest and oldest friends,' he added.

'Kindest and oldest friends!' thought Herbert to himself. 'Well, this is strange indeed.'

'It is but a slight distance,' said Lady Annabel, who thought it necessary to enforce the invitation. 'We live in the valley of which yonder hill forms a part.'

'And there we have passed our winter and our spring,' added Venetia, 'almost as delightfully as you could have done at Athens.'

'Well,' thought Cadurcis to himself, 'I have seen many of the world's marvels, but this day is a miracle.'

When they had proceeded through the olive-wood, and mounted the acclivity, they arrived at a path

which permitted the ascent of only one person at a time. Cadurcis was last, and followed Venetia. Unable any longer to endure the suspense, he was rather irritated that she kept so close to her father; he himself loitered a few paces behind, and, breaking off a branch of laurel, he tossed it at her. She looked round and smiled; he beckoned to her to fall back. 'Tell me, Venetia,' he said, 'what does all this mean?'

'It means that we are at last all very happy,' she replied. 'Do you not see my father?'

'Yes; and I am very glad to see him; but this company is the very last in which I expected to have that pleasure.'

'It is too long a story to tell now; you must imagine it.'

'But are you glad to see me?'

'Very.'

'I don't think you care for me the least.'

'Silly Lord Cadurcis!' she said, smiling.

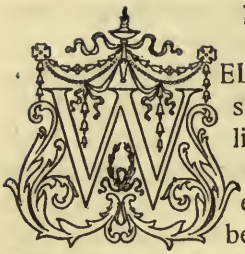
'If you call me Lord Cadurcis, I shall immediately go back to the brig, and set sail this night for Athens.'

'Well then, silly Plantagenet!'

He laughed, and they ran on.

CHAPTER LXXI.

Happy Reunion.



'ELL, I am not surprised that you should have passed your time delightfully here,' said Lord Cadurcis to Lady Annabel, when they had entered the villa; 'for I never beheld so delightful a retreat. It is even more exquisite than your villa on the lake, of which George gave me so glowing a description. I I was almost tempted to hasten to you. Would you have smiled on me?' he added, rather archly, and in a coaxing tone.

'I am more gratified that we have met here,' said Lady Annabel.

'And thus,' added Cadurcis.

'You have been a great traveller since we last met?' said Lady Annabel, a little embarrassed.

'My days of restlessness are over,' said Cadurcis. 'I desire nothing more dearly than to settle down in the bosom of these green hills as you have done.'

'This life suits Mr. Herbert,' said Lady Annabel. 'He is fond of seclusion, and you know I am accustomed to it.'

'Ah! yes,' said Cadurcis, mournfully. 'When I

was in Greece, I used often to wish that none of us had ever left dear Cherbury; but I do not now.'

'We must forget Cherbury,' said Lady Annabel.

'I cannot: I cannot forget her who cherished my melancholy childhood. Dear Lady Annabel,' he added in a voice of emotion, and offering her his hand, 'forget all my follies, and remember that I was your child, once as dutiful as you were affectionate.'

Who could resist this appeal? Lady Annabel, not without agitation, yielded him her hand, which he pressed to his lips. 'Now I am again happy,' said Cadurcis; 'now we are all happy. Sweetest of friends, you have removed in a moment the bitterness of years.'

Although lights were in the saloon, the windows opening on the portico were not closed. The evening air was soft and balmy, and though the moon had not risen, the distant hills were clear in the starlight. Venetia was standing in the portico conversing with George Cadurcis.

'I suppose you are too much of a Turk to drink our coffee, Lord Cadurcis,' said Herbert. Cadurcis turned and joined him, together with Lady Annabel.

'Nay,' said Lord Cadurcis, in a joyous tone, 'Lady Annabel will answer for me that I always find everything perfect under her roof.'

Captain Cadurcis and Venetia now re-entered the villa; they clustered round the table, and seated themselves.

'Why, Venetia,' said Cadurcis, 'George met me in Sicily and quite frightened me about you. Is it the air of the Apennines that has worked these marvels? for, really, you appear to me exactly the same as when we learnt the French vocabulary together, ten years ago.'

'"The French vocabulary together, ten years ago!"' thought Herbert; 'not a mere London acquaintance, then. This is very strange.'

'Why, indeed, Plantagenet,' replied Venetia, 'I was very unwell when George visited us; but I really have quite forgotten that I ever was an invalid, and I never mean to be again.'

'"Plantagenet!"' soliloquised Herbert. 'And this is the great poet of whom I have heard so much! My daughter is tolerably familiar with him.'

'I have brought you all sorts of buffooneries from Stamboul,' continued Cadurcis; 'sweetmeats, and slippers, and shawls, and daggers worn only by sultanas, with which, if necessary, they can keep "the harem's lord" in order. I meant to have sent them with George to England, for really I did not anticipate our meeting here.'

'"Sweetmeats and slippers,"' said Herbert to himself, '"shawls and daggers!" What next?'

'And has George been with you all the time?' inquired Venetia.

'Oh! we quarrelled now and then, of course. He found Athens dull, and would stay at Constantinople, chained by the charms of a fair Perote, to whom he wanted me to write sonnets in his name. I would not, because I thought it immoral. But, on the whole, we got on very well; a sort of Pylades and Orestes, I assure you; we never absolutely fought.'

'Come, come,' said George, 'Cadurcis is always ashamed of being amiable. We were together much more than I ever intended or anticipated. You know mine was a sporting tour; and therefore, of course, we were sometimes separated. But he was exceedingly popular with all parties, especially the Turks,

whom he rewarded for their courtesy by writing odes to the Greeks to stir them up to revolt.'

'Well, they never read them,' said Cadurcis. 'All we, poor fellows, can do,' he added, turning to Herbert, 'is to wake the Hellenistic raptures of May Fair; and that they call fame; as much like fame as a toadstool is like a truffle.'

'Nevertheless, I hope the muse has not slumbered,' said Herbert; 'for you have had the happiest inspiration in the climes in which you have resided; not only are they essentially poetic, but they offer a virgin vein.'

'I have written a little,' replied Cadurcis; 'I will give it you, if you like, some day to turn over. Yours is the only opinion that I really care for. I have no great idea of the poetry; but I am very strong in my costume. I feel very confident about that. I fancy I know how to hit off a pasha, or touch in a Greek pirate now. As for all the things I wrote in England, I really am ashamed of them. I got up my orientalism from books, and sultans and sultanas at masquerades,' he added, archly. 'I remember I made my heroines always wear turbans; only conceive my horror when I found that a Turkish woman would as soon think of putting my hat on as a turban, and that it was an article of dress entirely confined to a Bond Street milliner.'

The evening passed in interesting and diverting conversation; of course, principally contributed by the two travellers, who had seen so much. Inspirited by his interview with Lady Annabel, and her gracious reception of his overtures, Lord Cadurcis was in one of those frolic humours which we have before noticed were not unnatural to him. He had considerable

powers of mimicry, and the talent that had pictured to Venetia in old days, with such liveliness, the habits of the old maids of Morpeth, was now engaged on more considerable topics; an interview with a pasha, a peep into a harem, a visit to a pirate's isle, the slave-market, the bazaar, the barracks of the janissaries, all touched with irresistible vitality, and coloured with the rich phrases of unrivalled force of expression. The laughter was loud and continual; even Lady Annabel joined zealously in the glee. As for Herbert, he thought Cadurcis by far the most hearty and amusing person he had ever known, and could not refrain from contrasting him with the picture which his works and the report of the world had occasionally enabled him to sketch to his mind's eye; the noble, young, and impassioned bard, pouring forth the eloquent tide of his morbid feelings to an idolising world, from whose applause he nevertheless turned with an almost misanthropic melancholy.

It was now much past the noon of night, and the hour of separation, long postponed, was inevitable. Often had Cadurcis risen to depart, and often, without regaining his seat, had he been tempted by his friends, and especially Venetia, into fresh narratives. At last he said, 'Now we must go. Lady Annabel looks good night. I remember the look,' he said, laughing, 'when we used to beg for a quarter of an hour more. O Venetia! do not you remember that Christmas when dear old Masham read Julius Cæsar, and we were to sit up until it was finished. When he got to the last act I hid his spectacles. I never confessed it until this moment. Will you pardon me, Lady Annabel?' and he pressed his hands together in a mockery of supplication.

'Will you come and breakfast with us to-morrow?' said Lady Annabel.

'With delight,' he answered. 'I am used, you know, to walks before breakfast. George, I do not think George can do it, though. George likes his comforts; he is a regular John Bull. He was always calling for tea when we were in Turkey!'

At this moment Mistress Pauncefort entered the room, ostensibly on some little affair of her mistress, but really to reconnoitre.

'Ah! Mistress Pauncefort; my old friend, Mistress Pauncefort, how do you do?' exclaimed his lordship.

'Quite well, my lord, please your lordship; and very glad to see your lordship again, and looking so well too.'

'Ah! Mistress Pauncefort, you always flattered me!'

'Oh! dear, my lord, your lordship, no,' said Mistress Pauncefort, with a simper.

'But you, Pauncefort,' said Cadurcis, 'why, there must be some magic in the air here. I have been complimenting your lady and Miss Venetia; but really, you—I should almost have thought it was some younger sister.'

'Oh! my lord, you have such a way,' said Mistress Pauncefort, retreating with a slow step that still lingered for a remark.

'Pauncefort, is that an Italian cap?' said Lord Cadurcis; 'you know, Pauncefort, you were always famous for your caps.'

Mistress Pauncefort disappeared in a fluster of delight.

And now they had indeed departed. There was a pause of complete silence after they had disappeared,

the slight and not painful reaction after the mirthful excitement of the last few hours. At length Herbert, dropping, as was his evening custom, a few drops of orange-flower into a tumbler of water, said, 'Annabel, my love, I am rather surprised that neither you nor Venetia should have mentioned to me that you knew, and knew so intimately, a man like Lord Cadurcis.'

Lady Annabel appeared a little confused; she looked even at Venetia, but Venetia's eyes were on the floor. At length she said, 'In truth, Marmion, since we met we have thought only of you.'

'Cadurcis Abbey, papa, is close to Cherbury,' said Venetia.

'Cherbury!' said Herbert, with a faint blush. 'I have never seen it, and now I shall never see it. No matter, my country is your mother and yourself. Some find a home in their country, I find a country in my home. Well,' he added, in a gayer tone, 'it has gratified me much to meet Lord Cadurcis. We were happy before, but now we are even gay. I like to see you smile, Annabel, and hear Venetia laugh. I feel, myself, quite an unusual hilarity. Cadurcis! It is very strange how often I have mused over that name. A year ago it was one of my few wishes to know him; my wishes, then, dear Annabel, were not very ambitious. They did not mount so high as you have since permitted them. And now I do know him, and under what circumstances! Is not life strange? But is it not happy? I feel it so. Good night, sweet wife; my darling daughter, a happy, happy night!' He embraced them ere they retired; and opening a volume composed his mind after the novel excitement of the evening.

CHAPTER LXXII.

Philosophy or Happiness?

CADURCIS left the brig early in the morning alone, and strolled towards the villa. He met Herbert half-way to Spezzia, who turned back with him towards home. They sat down on a crag opposite the sea; there was a light breeze, the fishing boats were out, and the view was as animated as the fresh air was cheering.

'There they go,' said Cadurcis, smiling, 'catching John Dory, as you and I try to catch John Bull. Now if these people could understand what two great men were watching them, how they would stare! But they don't care a sprat for us, not they! They are not part of the world,—the three or four thousand civilised savages for whom we sweat our brains, and whose fetid breath, perfumed with musk, is called fame. Pah!'

Herbert smiled. 'I have not cared much myself for this same world.'

'Why, no; you have done something, and shown your contempt for them. No one can deny that. I will some day, if I have an opportunity. I owe it

them; I think I can show them a trick or two still.* I have got a Damascus blade in store for their thick hides. I will turn their flank yet.'

'And gain a victory where conquest brings no glory. You are worth brighter laurels, Lord Cadurcis.'

'Now, is not it the most wonderful thing in the world that you and I have met?' said Cadurcis. 'Now, I look upon ourselves as something like, eh! Fellows with some pith in them. By Jove, if we only joined together, how we could lay it on! Crack, crack, crack; I think I see them wincing under the thong, the pompous poltroons! If you only knew how they behaved to me! By Jove, sir, they hooted me going to the House of Lords, and nearly pulled me off my horse. The ruffians would have massacred me if they could; and then they all ran away from a drummer-boy and a couple of grenadiers, who were going the rounds to change guard. Was not that good? Fine, eh? A brutish mob in a fit of morality about to immolate a gentleman, and then scampering off from a sentry. I call that human nature!'

'As long as they leave us alone, and do not burn us alive, I am content,' said Herbert. 'I am callous to what they say.'

'So am I,' said Cadurcis. 'I made out a list the other day of all the persons and things I have been compared to. It begins well with Alcibiades, but it ends with the Swiss giantess or the Polish dwarf, I forget which. Here is your book. You see it has been well thumbed. In fact, to tell the truth, it was my cribbing-book, and I always kept it by me when

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*I think I know a trick or two would turn
Your flanks. *Don Juan.*

I was writing at Athens, like a gradus, a *gradus ad Parnassum,* you know. But although I crib, I am candid, and you see I fairly own it to you.'

'You are welcome to all I have ever written,' said Herbert. 'Mine were but crude dreams. I wished to see man noble and happy; but if he will persist in being vile and miserable, I must even be content. I can struggle for him no more.'

'Well, you opened my mind,' said Cadurcis. 'I owe you everything; but I quite agree with you that nothing is worth an effort. As for philosophy and freedom, and all that, they tell devilish well in a stanza; but men have always been fools and slaves, and fools and slaves they always will be.'

'Nay,' said Herbert, 'I will not believe that. I will not give up a jot of my conviction of a great and glorious future for human destinies; but its consummation will not be so rapid as I once thought, and in the meantime I die.'

'Ah, death!' said Lord Cadurcis, 'that is a botherer. What can you make of death? There are those poor fishermen now; there will be a white squall some day, and they will go down with those lateen sails of theirs, and be food for the very prey they were going to catch; and if you continue living here, you may eat one of your neighbours in the shape of a shoal of red mullets, when it is the season. The great secret, we cannot penetrate that with all our philosophy, my dear Herbert. "All that we know is, nothing can be known." Barren, barren, barren! And yet what a grand world it is! Look at this bay, these blue waters, the mountains, and these chestnuts, devilish fine! The fact is, truth is veiled, but, like the Shekinah over the tabernacle, the veil is of dazzling light!'

'Life is the great wonder,' said Herbert, 'into which all that is strange and startling resolves itself. The mist of familiarity obscures from us the miracle of our being. Mankind are constantly starting at events which they consider extraordinary. But a philosopher acknowledges only one miracle, and that is life. Political revolutions, changes of empire, wrecks of dynasties and the opinions that support them, these are the marvels of the vulgar, but these are only transient modifications of life. The origin of existence is, therefore, the first object which a true philosopher proposes to himself. Unable to discover it, he accepts certain results from his unbiassed observation of its obvious nature, and on them he establishes certain principles to be our guides in all social relations, whether they take the shape of laws or customs. Nevertheless, until the principle of life be discovered, all theories, and all systems of conduct founded on theory must be considered provisional.'

'And do you believe that there is a chance of its being discovered?' inquired Cadurcis.

'I cannot, from any reason in my own intelligence, find why it should not,' said Herbert.

'You conceive it possible that a man may attain earthly immortality?' inquired Cadurcis.

'Undoubtedly.'

'By Jove!' said Cadurcis, 'if I only knew how, I would purchase an immense annuity directly.'

'When I said undoubtedly,' said Herbert, smiling, 'I meant only to express that I know no invincible reason to the contrary. I see nothing inconsistent with the existence of a Supreme Creator in the annihilation of death. It appears to me an achievement worthy of his omnipotence. I believe in the possi-

bility, but I believe in nothing more. I anticipate the final result, but not by individual means. It will, of course, be produced by some vast and silent and continuous operation of nature, gradually effecting some profound and comprehensive alteration in her order, a change of climate, for instance, the great enemy of life, so that the inhabitants of the earth may attain a patriarchal age. This renovated breed may in turn produce a still more vigorous offspring, and so we may ascend the scale, from the threescore and ten of the Psalmist to the immortality of which we speak. Indeed I, for my own part, believe the operation has already commenced, although thousands of centuries may elapse before it is consummated; the threescore and ten of the Psalmist is already obsolete; the whole world is talking of the general change of its seasons and its atmosphere. If the origin of America were such as many profound philosophers suppose, viz., a sudden emersion of a new continent from the waves, it is impossible to doubt that such an event must have had a very great influence on the climate of the world. Besides, why should we be surprised that the nature of man should change? Does not everything change? Is not change the law of nature? My skin changes every year, my hair never belongs to me a month, the nail on my hand is only a passing possession. I doubt whether a man at fifty is the same material being that he is at five-and-twenty.'

'I wonder,' said Lord Cadurcis, 'if a creditor brought an action against you at fifty for goods delivered at five-and-twenty, one could set up the want of identity as a plea in bar. It would be a consolation to an elderly gentleman.'

'I am afraid mankind are too hostile to philosophy,'

said Herbert, smiling, 'to permit so desirable a consummation.'

'Should you consider a long life a blessing?' said Cadurcis. 'Would you like, for instance, to live to the age of Methusalem?'

'"Those whom the gods love die young,"' said Herbert. 'For the last twenty years I have wished to die, and I have sought death. But my feelings, I confess, on that head are at present very much modified.'

'Youth, glittering youth!' said Cadurcis in a musing tone; 'I remember when the prospect of losing my youth frightened me out of my wits; I dreamt of nothing but grey hairs, a paunch, and the gout or the gravel. But I fancy every period of life has its pleasures, and as we advance in life the exercise of power and the possession of wealth must be great consolations to the majority; we bully our children and hoard our cash.'

'Two most noble occupations!' said Herbert; 'but I think in this world there is just as good a chance of being bullied by our children first, and paying their debts afterwards.'

'Faith! you are right,' said Cadurcis, laughing, 'and lucky is he who has neither creditors nor offspring, and who owes neither money nor affection, after all the most difficult to pay of the two.'

'It cannot be commanded, certainly,' said Herbert. 'There is no usury for love.'

'And yet it is very expensive, too, sometimes,' said Cadurcis, laughing. 'For my part, sympathy is a puzzler.'

'You should read Cabanis,' said Herbert, 'if indeed, you have not. I think I may find it here; I

will lend it you. It has, from its subject, many errors, but it is very suggestive.'

'Now, that is kind, for I have not a book here, and, after all, there is nothing like reading. I wish I had read more, but it is not too late. I envy you your learning, besides so many other things. However, I hope we shall not part in a hurry; we have met at last,' he said, extending his hand, 'and we were always friends.'

Herbert shook his hand very warmly. 'I can assure you, Lord Cadurcis, you have not a more sincere admirer of your genius. I am happy in your society. For myself, I now aspire to be nothing better than an idler in life, turning over a page, and sometimes noting down a fancy. You have, it appears, known my family long and intimately, and you were, doubtless, surprised at finding me with them. I have returned to my hearth, and I am content. Once I sacrificed my happiness to my philosophy, and now I have sacrificed my philosophy to my happiness.'

'Dear friend!' said Cadurcis, putting his arm affectionately in Herbert's as they walked along, 'for, indeed, you must allow me to style you so; all the happiness and all the sorrow of my life alike flow from your roof!'

In the meantime Lady Annabel and Venetia came forth from the villa to their morning meal in their amphitheatre of hills. Marmion was not there to greet them as usual.

'Was not Plantagenet amusing last night?' said Venetia; 'and are not you happy, dear mother, to see him once more?'

'Indeed I am now always happy,' said Lady Annabel.

'And George was telling me last night, in this portico, of all their life. He is more attached to Plantagenet than ever. He says it is impossible for any one to have behaved with greater kindness, or to have led, in every sense, a more calm and rational life. When he was alone at Athens, he did nothing but write. George says that all his former works are nothing to what he has written now.'

'He is very engaging,' said Lady Annabel.

'I think he will be such a delightful companion for papa. I am sure papa must like him. I hope he will stay some time; for, after all, poor dear papa, he must require a little amusement besides our society. Instead of being with his books, he might be walking and talking with Plantagenet. I think, dearest mother, we shall be happier than ever!'

At this moment Herbert, with Cadurcis leaning on his arm, and apparently speaking with great earnestness, appeared in the distance. 'There they are,' said Venetia; 'I knew they would be friends. Come, dearest mother, let us meet them.'

'You see, Lady Annabel,' said Lord Cadurcis, 'it is just as I said: Mr. George is not here; he is having tea and toast on board the brig.'

'I do not believe it,' said Venetia, smiling.

They seated themselves at the breakfast-table.

'You should have seen our Apennine breakfasts in the autumn, Lord Cadurcis,' said Herbert. 'Every fruit of nature seemed crowded before us. It was indeed a meal for a poet or a painter like Paul Veronese; our grapes, our figs, our peaches, our mountain strawberries, they made a glowing picture. For my part, I have an original prejudice against animal food which I have never quite overcome, and I believe it

is only to please Lady Annabel that I have relapsed into the heresy of cutlets.'

'Do you think I have grown fatter, Lady Annabel?' said Lord Cadurcis, starting up; 'I brought myself down at Athens to bread and olives, but I have been committing terrible excesses lately, but only fish.'

'Ah! here is George!' said Lady Annabel.

And Captain Cadurcis appeared, followed by a couple of sailors, bearing a huge case.

'George,' said Venetia, 'I have been defending you against Plantagenet; he said you would not come.'

'Never mind, George, it was only behind your back,' said Lord Cadurcis; 'and, under those legitimate circumstances, why, even our best friends cannot expect us to spare them.'

'I have brought Venetia her toys,' said Captain Cadurcis, 'and she was right to defend me, as I have been working for her.'

The top of the case was knocked off, and all the Turkish buffooneries, as Cadurcis called them, made their appearance: slippers and shawls, and bottles of perfumes, and little hand mirrors, beautifully embroidered; and fanciful daggers, and rosaries, and a thousand other articles, of which they had plundered the bazaars of Constantinople.

'And here is a Turkish volume of poetry, beautifully illuminated; and that is for you,' said Cadurcis giving it to Herbert. 'Perhaps it is a translation of one of our works. Who knows? We can always say it is.'

'This is the second present you have made me this morning. Here is a volume of my works,' said Herbert, producing the book that Cadurcis had before given him. 'I never expected that anything I wrote

would be so honoured. This, too, is the work of which I am the least ashamed, for my wife admired it. There, Annabel, even though Lord Cadurcis is here, I will present it to you; 'tis an old friend.'

Lady Annabel accepted the book very graciously, and, in spite of all the temptations of her toys, Venetia could not refrain from peeping over her mother's shoulder at its contents. 'Mother,' she whispered, in a voice inaudible save to Lady Annabel, 'I may read this!'

Lady Annabel gave it her.

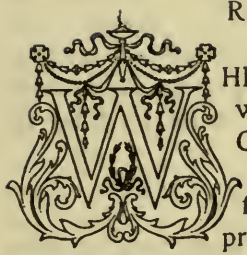
'And now we must send for Pauncefort, I think,' said Lady Annabel, 'to collect and take care of our treasures.'

'Pauncefort,' said Lord Cadurcis, when that gentlewoman appeared, 'I have brought you a shawl, but I could not bring you a turban, because the Turkish ladies do not wear turbans; but if I had thought we should have met so soon, I would have had one made on purpose for you.'

'La! my lord, you always are so polite!'

CHAPTER LXXIII.

Renewed Prayers.



HEN the breakfast was over, they wandered about the valley, which Cadurcis could not sufficiently admire. Insensibly he drew Venetia from the rest of the party, on the pretence of showing her a view at some little distance. They walked along by the side of a rivulet, which glided through the hills, until they were nearly a mile from the villa, though still in sight.

'Venetia,' he at length said, turning the conversation to a more interesting topic, 'your father and myself have disburthened our minds to each other this morning; I think we know each other now as well as if we were as old acquaintances as myself and his daughter.'

'Ah! I knew that you and papa must agree,' said Venetia; 'I was saying so this morning to my mother.'

'Venetia,' said Cadurcis, with a laughing eye, 'all this is very strange, is it not?'

'Very strange, indeed, Plantagenet; I should not be surprised if it appeared to you as yet even incredible.'

'It is miraculous,' said Cadurcis, 'but not incredible; an angel interfered, and worked the miracle. I know all.'

Venetia looked at him with a faint flush upon her cheek; she gathered a flower and plucked it to pieces.

'What a singular destiny ours has been, Venetia!' said Cadurcis. 'Do you know, I can sit for an hour together and muse over it.'

'Can you, Plantagenet?'

'I have such an extraordinary memory; I do not think I ever forgot anything. We have had some remarkable conversations in our time, eh, Venetia? Do you remember my visit to Cherbury before I went to Cambridge, and the last time I saw you before I left England? And now it all ends in this! What do you think of it, Venetia?'

'Think of what, Plantagenet?'

'Why, of this reconciliation?'

'Dear Plantagenet, what can I think of it but what I have expressed, that it is a wonderful event, but the happiest in my life.'

'You are quite happy now?'

'Quite.'

'I see you do not care for me the least.'

'Plantagenet, you are perverse. Are you not here?'

'Did you ever think of me when I was away?'

'You know very well, Plantagenet, that it is impossible for me to cease to be interested in you. Could I refrain from thinking of such a friend?'

'Friend! poh! I am not your friend; and, as for that, you never once mentioned my name to your father, Miss Venetia.'

'You might easily conceive that there were reasons for such silence,' said Venetia. 'It could not arise on my part from forgetfulness or indifference; for, even if my feelings were changed towards you, you are not a person that one would, or even could,

avoid speaking of, especially to papa, who must have felt such interest in you! I am sure, even if I had not known you, there were a thousand occasions which would have called your name to my lips, had they been uncontrolled by other considerations.'

'Come, Venetia, I am not going to submit to compliments from you,' said Lord Cadurcis; 'no blarney. I wish you only to think of me as you did ten years ago. I will not have our hearts polluted by the vulgarity of fame. I want you to feel for me as you did when we were children. I will not be an object of interest, and admiration, and fiddlestick to you; I will not submit to it.'

'Well, you shall not,' said Venetia, laughing. 'I will not admire you the least; I will only think of you as a good little boy.'

'You do not love me any longer, I see that,' said Cadurcis.

'Yes I do, Plantagenet.'

'You do not love me so much as you did the night before I went to Eton, and we sat over the fire? Ah! how often I have thought of that night when I was at Athens!' he added in a tone of emotion.

'Dear Plantagenet,' said Venetia, 'do not be silly. I am in the highest spirits in the world; I am quite gay with happiness, and all because you have returned. Do not spoil my pleasure.'

'Ah, Venetia! I see how it is; you have forgotten me, or worse than forgotten me.'

'Well, I am sure I do not know what to say to satisfy you,' said Venetia. 'I think you very unreasonable, and very ungrateful too, for I have always been your friend, Plantagenet, and I am sure you

know it. You sent me a message before you went abroad.'

'Darling!' said Lord Cadurcis, seizing her hand, 'I am not ungrateful, I am not unreasonable. I adore you. You were very kind then, when all the world was against me. You shall see how I will pay them off, the dogs! and worse than dogs, their betters far; dogs are faithful. Do you remember poor old Marmion? How we were mystified, Venetia! Little did we think then who was Marmion's godfather.'

Venetia smiled; but she said, 'I do not like this bitterness of yours, Plantagenet. You have no cause to complain of the world, and you magnify a petty squabble with a contemptible coterie into a quarrel with a nation. It is not a wise humour, and, if you indulge it, it will not be a happy one.'

'I will do exactly what you wish on every subject,' said Cadurcis, 'if you will do exactly what I wish on one.'

'Well!' said Venetia.

'Once you told me,' said Cadurcis, 'that you would not marry me without the consent of your father; then, most unfairly, you added to your conditions the consent of your mother. Now both your parents are very opportunely at hand; let us fall down upon our knees, and beg their blessing.'

'O! my dear Plantagenet, I think it will be much better for me never to marry. We are both happy now; let us remain so. You can live here, and I can be your sister. Will not that do?'

'No, Venetia, it will not.'

'Dear Plantagenet!' said Venetia with a faltering voice, 'if you knew how much I had suffered, dear Plantagenet!'

'I know it; I know all,' said Cadurcis, taking her arm and placing it tenderly in his. 'Now listen to me, sweet girl; I loved you when a child when I was unknown to the world, and unknown to myself; I loved you as a youth not utterly inexperienced in the world, and when my rising passions had taught me to speculate on the character of women; I loved you as a man, Venetia, with that world at my feet, that world which I scorn, but which I will command; I have been constant, Venetia; your heart assures you of that. You are the only being in existence who exercises over me any influence; and the influence you possess is irresistible and eternal. It springs from some deep and mysterious sympathy of blood which I cannot penetrate. It can neither be increased nor diminished by time. It is entirely independent of its action. I pretend not to love you more at this moment than when I first saw you, when you entered the terrace-room at Cherbury and touched my cheek. From that moment I was yours. I declare to you, most solemnly I declare to you, that I know not what love is except to you. The world has called me a libertine; the truth is, no other woman can command my spirit for an hour. I see through them at a glance. I read all their weakness, frivolity, vanity, affectation, as if they were touched by the revealing rod of Asmodeus. You were born to be my bride. Unite yourself with me, control my destiny, and my course shall be like the sun of yesterday; but reject me, reject me, and I devote all my energies to the infernal gods; I will pour my lava over the earth until all that remains of my fatal and exhausted nature is a black and barren cone surrounded by bitter desolation.'

'Plantagenet, be calm!'

'I am perfectly calm, Venetia. You talk to me of your sufferings. What has occasioned them? A struggle against nature. Nature has now triumphed, and you are happy. What necessity was there for all this misery that has fallen on your house? Why is your father an exile? Do not you think that if your mother had chosen to exert her influence she might have prevented the most fatal part of his career? Undoubtedly despair impelled his actions as much as philosophy, though I give him credit for a pure and lofty spirit, to no man more. But not a murmur against your mother from me. She received my overtures of reconciliation last night with more than cordiality. She is your mother, Venetia, and she once was mine. Indeed, I love her; indeed, you would find that I would study her happiness. For after all, sweet, is there another woman in existence better qualified to fill the position of my mother-in-law? I could not behave unkindly to her; I could not treat her with neglect or harshness; not merely for the sake of her many admirable qualities, but from other considerations, Venetia, considerations we never can forget. By heavens! I love your mother; I do, indeed, Venetia! I remember so many things; her last words to me when I went to Eton. If she would only behave kindly to me, you would see what a son-in-law I should make. You would be jealous, that you should, Venetia. I can bear anything from you, Venetia, but, with others, I cannot forget who I am. It makes me bitter to be treated as Lady Annabel treated me last year in London: but a smile and a kind word and I recall all her maternal love; I do indeed, Venetia; last night when she was kind I could have kissed her!'

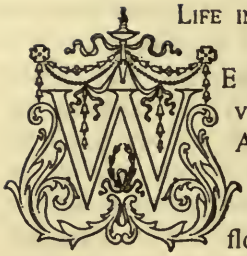
Poor Venetia could not answer, her tears were flowing so plenteously. 'I have told your father all, sweetest,' said Cadurcis; 'I concealed nothing.'

'And what said he?' murmured Venetia.

'It rests with your mother. After all that has passed, he will not attempt to control your fate. And he is right. Perhaps his interference in my favour might even injure me. But there is no cause for despair; all I wanted was to come to an understanding with you; to be sure you loved me as you always have done. I will not be impatient. I will do everything to soothe and conciliate and gratify Lady Annabel; you will see how I will behave! As you say, too, we are happy because we are together; and, therefore, it would be unreasonable not to be patient. I never can be sufficiently grateful for this meeting. I concluded you would be in England, though we were on our way to Milan to inquire after you. George has been a great comfort to me in all this affair, Venetia; he loves you, Venetia, almost as much as I do. I think I should have gone mad during that cursed affair in England, had it not been for George. I thought you would hate me; but, when George brought me your message, I cared for nothing; and then his visit to the lake was so devilish kind! He is a noble fellow and a true friend. My sweet, sweet Venetia, dry your eyes. Let us rejoin them with a smile. We have not been long away. I will pretend we have been violet hunting,' said Cadurcis, stooping down and plucking up a handful of flowers. 'Do you remember our violets at home, Venetia? Do you know, Venetia, I always fancy every human being is like some object in nature; and you always put me in mind of a violet, so fresh and sweet and delicate!'

CHAPTER LXXIV.

Life in the Happy Valley.



E HAVE been exploring the happy valley,' said Lord Cadurcis to Lady Annabel, 'and here is our plunder,' and he gave her the violets.

'You were always fond of flowers,' said Lady Annabel.

'Yes, I imbibed the taste from you,' said Cadurcis, gratified by the gracious remark.

He seated himself at her feet, examined and admired her work, and talked of old times, but with such infinite discretion, that he did not arouse a single painful association. Venetia was busied with her father's poems, and smiled often at the manuscript notes of Cadurcis. Lying, as usual, on the grass, and leaning his head on his left arm, Herbert was listening to Captain Cadurcis, who was endeavouring to give him a clear idea of the Bosphorus. Thus the morning wore away, until the sun drove them into the villa.

'I will show you my library, Lord Cadurcis,' said Herbert.

Cadurcis followed him into a spacious apartment, where he found a collection so considerable that he

could not suppress his surprise. 'Italian spoils chiefly,' said Herbert; 'a friend of mine purchased an old library at Bologna for me, and it turned out richer than I imagined: the rest are old friends that have been with me, many of them at least, at college. I brought them back with me from America, for then they were my only friends.'

'Can you find Cabanis?' said Lord Cadurcis.

Herbert looked about. 'It is in this neighbourhood, I imagine,' he said. Cadurcis endeavoured to assist him. 'What is this?' he said; 'Plato!'

'I should like to read Plato at Athens,' said Herbert. 'My ambition now does not soar beyond such elegant fortune.'

'We are all under great obligations to Plato,' said Cadurcis. 'I remember, when I was in London, I always professed myself his disciple, and it is astonishing what results I experienced. Platonic love was a great invention.'

Herbert smiled; but, as he saw Cadurcis knew nothing about the subject, he made no reply.

'Plato says, or at least I think he says, that life is love,' said Cadurcis. 'I have said it myself in a very grand way too; I believe I cribbed it from you. But what does he mean? I am sure I meant nothing; but I dare say you did.'

'I certainly had some meaning,' said Herbert, stopping in his search, and smiling, 'but I do not know whether I expressed it. The principle of every motion, that is of all life, is desire or love: at present, I am in love with the lost volume of Cabanis, and, if it were not for the desire of obtaining it, I should not now be affording any testimony of my vitality by looking after it.'

'That is very clear,' said Cadurcis, 'but I was thinking of love in the vulgar sense, in the shape of a petticoat. Certainly, when I am in love with a woman, I feel love is life; but, when I am out of love, which often happens, and generally very soon, I still contrive to live.'

'We exist,' said Herbert, 'because we sympathise. If we did not sympathise with the air, we should die. But, if we only sympathised with the air, we should be in the lowest order of brutes, baser than the sloth. Mount from the sloth to the poet. It is sympathy that makes you a poet. It is your desire that the airy children of your brain should be born anew within another's, that makes you create; therefore, a misanthropical poet is a contradiction in terms.'

'But when he writes a lampoon?' said Cadurcis.

'He desires that the majority, who are not lampooned, should share his hate,' said Herbert.

'But Swift lampooned the species,' said Cadurcis. 'For my part, I think life is hatred.'

'But Swift was not sincere, for he wrote the Drapier's Letters at the same time. Besides, the very fact of your abusing mankind proves that you do not hate them; it is clear that you are desirous of obtaining their good opinion of your wit. You value them, you esteem them, you love them. Their approbation causes you to act, and makes you happy. As for sexual love,' said Herbert, 'of which you were speaking, its quality and duration depend upon the degree of sympathy that subsists between the two persons interested. Plato believed, and I believe with him, in the existence of a spiritual antitype of the soul, so that when we are born, there is something within us which, from the instant we live and move, thirsts

after its likeness. This propensity develops itself with the development of our nature. The gratification of the senses soon becomes a very small part of that profound and complicated sentiment which we call love. Love, on the contrary, is an universal thirst for a communion, not merely of the senses, but of our whole nature, intellectual, imaginative, and sensitive. He who finds his antitype enjoys a love perfect and enduring; time cannot change it, distance cannot remove it; the sympathy is complete. He who loves an object that approaches his antitype is proportionately happy, the sympathy is feeble or strong, as it may be. If men were properly educated, and their faculties fully developed,' continued Herbert, 'the discovery of the antitype would be easy; and, when the day arrives that it is a matter of course, the perfection of civilisation will be attained.'

'I believe in Plato,' said Lord Cadurcis, 'and I think I have found my antitype. His theory accounts for what I never could understand.'

CHAPTER LXXV.

Kindred Souls.

IN THE course of the evening Lady Annabel requested Lord Cadurcis and his cousin to take up their quarters at the villa. Independent of the delight which such an invitation occasioned him, Cadurcis was doubly gratified by its being given by her. It was indeed her unprompted solicitation; for neither Herbert nor even Venetia, however much they desired the arrangement, was anxious to appear eager for its fulfilment. Desirous of pleasing her husband and her daughter; a little penitent as to her previous treatment of Cadurcis, now that time and strange events had combined to soften her feelings; and won by his engaging demeanour towards herself, Lady Annabel had of mere impulse resolved upon the act; and she was repaid by the general air of gaiety and content which it diffused through the circle.

Few weeks indeed passed ere her ladyship taught herself even to contemplate the possibility of an union between her daughter and Lord Cadurcis. The change which had occurred in her own feelings and position had in her estimation removed very con-

siderable barriers to such a result. It would not become her again to urge the peculiarity of his temperament as an insuperable objection to the marriage; that was out of the question, even if the conscience of Lady Annabel herself, now that she was so happy, were perfectly free from any participation in the causes which occasioned the original estrangement between Herbert and herself.

Desirous too, as mothers are, that her daughter should be suitably married, Lady Annabel could not shut her eyes to the great improbability of such an event occurring, now that Venetia had, as it were, resigned all connection with her native country. As to her daughter marrying a foreigner, the very idea was intolerable to her; and Venetia appeared therefore to have resumed that singular and delicate position which she occupied at Cherbury in earlier years, when Lady Annabel had esteemed her connection with Lord Cadurcis so fortunate and auspicious. Moreover, while Lord Cadurcis, in birth, rank, country, and consideration, offered in every view of the case so gratifying an alliance, he was perhaps the only Englishman whose marriage into her family would not deprive her of the society of her child. Cadurcis had a great distaste for England, which he seized every opportunity to express. He continually declared that he would never return there; and his habits of seclusion and study so entirely accorded with those of her husband, that Lady Annabel did not doubt they would continue to form only one family; a prospect so engaging to her, that it would perhaps have alone removed the distrust which she had so unfortunately cherished against the admirer of her daughter; and although some of his reputed opinions occasioned her

doubtless considerable anxiety, he was nevertheless very young, and far from emancipated from the beneficial influence of his early education. She was sanguine that this sheep would yet return to the fold where once he had been tended with so much solicitude.

When too she recalled the chastened spirit of her husband, and could not refrain from feeling that, had she not quitted him, he might at a much earlier period have attained a mood so full of promise and to her so cheering, she could not resist the persuasion that, under the influence of Venetia, Cadurcis might speedily free himself from the dominion of that arrogant genius to which, rather than to any serious conviction, the result of a studious philosophy, she attributed his indifference on the most important of subjects. On the whole, however, it was with no common gratification that Lady Annabel observed the strong and intimate friendship that arose between her husband and Cadurcis. They were inseparable companions. Independently of the natural sympathy between two highly imaginative minds, there were in the superior experience, the noble character, the vast knowledge, and refined taste of Herbert, charms of which Cadurcis was very susceptible.

Cadurcis had not been a great reader, and he liked the company of one whose mind was at once so richly cultured and so deeply meditative: thus he obtained matter and spirit distilled through the alembic of another's brain. Jealousy had never had a place in Herbert's temperament; now he was insensible even to emulation. He spoke of Cadurcis as he thought, with the highest admiration; as one without a rival, and in whose power it was to obtain an imperishable

fame. It was his liveliest pleasure to assist the full development of such an intellect, and to pour to him, with a lavish hand, all the treasures of his taste, his learning, his fancy, and his meditation. His kind heart, his winning manners, his subdued and perfect temper, and the remembrance of the relation which he bore to Venetia, completed the spell which bound Cadurcis to him with all the finest feelings of his nature. It was, indeed, an intercourse peculiarly beneficial to Cadurcis, whose career had hitherto tended rather to the development of the power, than the refinement of his genius; and to whom an active communion with an equal spirit of a more matured intelligence was an incident rather to be desired than expected. Herbert and Cadurcis, therefore, spent their mornings together, sometimes in the library, sometimes wandering in the chestnut woods, sometimes sailing in the boat of the brig, for they were both fond of the sea: in these excursions, George was in general their companion. He had become a great favourite with Herbert, as with everybody else. No one managed a boat so well, although Cadurcis prided himself also on his skill in this respect; and George was so frank and unaffected, and so used to his cousin's habits, that his presence never embarrassed Herbert and Cadurcis, and they read or conversed quite at their ease, as if there were no third person to mar, by his want of sympathy, the full communion of their intellect. The whole circle met at dinner, and never again parted until at a late hour of night. This was a most agreeable life; Cadurcis himself, good humoured because he was happy, doubly exerted himself to ingratiate himself with Lady Annabel, and felt every day that he was advancing. Venetia al-

ways smiled upon him, and praised him delightfully for his delightful conduct.

In the evening, Herbert would read to them the manuscript poems of Cadurcis, the fruits of his Attic residence and Grecian meditations. The poet would sometimes affect a playful bashfulness on this head, perhaps not altogether affected, and amuse Venetia, in a whisper, with his running comments; or exclaim with an arch air, 'I say, Venetia, what would Mrs. Montague and the Blues give for this, eh? I can fancy Hannah More in decent ecstasies!'

CHAPTER LXXVI.

The Workings of Destiny.

'IT IS an odd thing, my dear Herbert,' said Cadurcis to his friend, in one of these voyages, 'that destiny should have given you and me the same tutor.'

'Masham!' said Herbert, smiling. 'I tell you what is much more singular, my dear Cadurcis; it is, that, notwithstanding being our tutor, a mitre should have fallen upon his head.'

'I am heartily glad,' said Cadurcis. 'I like Masham very much; I really have a sincere affection for him. Do you know, during my infernal affair about those accursed Monteagles, when I went to the House of Lords, and was cut even by my own party — think of that, the polished ruffians! — Masham was the only person who came forward and shook hands with me, and in the most marked manner. A bishop, too! and the other side! that was good, was it not? But he would not see his old pupil snubbed; if he had waited ten minutes longer, he might have had a chance of seeing him massacred. And then they complain of my abusing England, my mother country; a step-dame, I take it.'

'Masham is in politics a Tory, in religion ultra-orthodox,' said Herbert. 'He has nothing about him of the latitudinarian; and yet he is the most amiable man with whom I am acquainted. Nature has given him a kind and charitable heart, which even his opinions have not succeeded in spoiling.'

'Perhaps that is exactly what he is saying of us two at this moment,' said Cadurcis. 'After all, what is truth? It changes as you change your clime or your country; it changes with the century. The truth of a hundred years ago is not the truth of the present day, and yet it may have been as genuine. Truth at Rome is not the truth of London, and both of them differ from the truth of Constantinople. For my part, I believe everything.'

'Well, that is practically prudent, if it be metaphysically possible,' said Herbert. 'Do you know that I have always been of opinion, that Pontius Pilate has been greatly misrepresented by Lord Bacon in the quotation of his celebrated question. "What is truth?" said jesting Pilate, and would not wait for an answer. Let us be just to Pontius Pilate, who has sins enough surely to answer for. There is no authority for the jesting humour given by Lord Bacon. Pilate was evidently of a merciful and clement disposition; probably an Epicurean. His question referred to a declaration immediately preceding it, that He who was before him came to bear witness to the truth. Pilate inquired what truth?'

'Well, I always have a prejudice against Pontius Pilate,' said Lord Cadurcis; 'and I think it is from seeing him, when I was a child, on an old Dutch tile fireplace at Marringhurst, dressed like a burgomaster. One cannot get over one's early impressions; but

when you picture him to me as an Epicurean, he assumes a new character. I fancy him young, noble, elegant, and accomplished; crowned with a wreath and waving a goblet, and enjoying his government vastly.'

'Before the introduction of Christianity,' said Herbert, 'the philosophic schools answered to our present religious sects. You said of a man that he was a Stoic or an Epicurean, as you say of a man now that he is a Calvinist or a Wesleyan.'

'I should have liked to know Epicurus,' said Cadurcis.

'I would sooner have known him and Plato than any of the ancients,' said Herbert. 'I look upon Plato as the wisest and the profoundest of men, and upon Epicurus as the most humane and gentle.'

'Now, how do you account for the great popularity of Aristotle in modern ages?' said Cadurcis; 'and the comparative neglect of these, at least his equals? Chance, I suppose, that settles everything.'

'By no means,' said Herbert. 'If you mean by chance an absence of accountable cause, I do not believe such a quality as chance exists. Every incident that happens, must be a link in a chain. In the present case, the monks monopolised literature, such as it might be, and they exercised their intellect only in discussing words. They, therefore, adopted Aristotle and the Peripatetics. Plato interfered with their heavenly knowledge, and Epicurus, who maintained the rights of man to pleasure and happiness, would have afforded a dangerous and seducing contrast to their dark and miserable code of morals.'

'I think, of the ancients,' said Cadurcis; 'Alcibiades and Alexander the Great are my favourites. They

were young, beautiful, and conquerors; a great combination.'

'And among the moderns?' inquired Herbert.

'They don't touch my fancy,' said Cadurcis. 'Who are your heroes?'

'Oh! I have many; but I confess I should like to pass a day with Milton, or Sir Philip Sidney.'

'Among mere literary men,' said Cadurcis, 'I should say Bayle.'

'And old Montaigne for me,' said Herbert.

'Well, I would fain visit him in his feudal château,' said Cadurcis. 'His is one of the books which give a spring to the mind. Of modern times, the feudal ages of Italy most interest me. I think that was a springtide of civilisation; all the fine arts flourished at the same moment.'

'They ever will,' said Herbert. 'All the inventive arts maintain a sympathetic connection between each other, for, after all, they are only various expressions of one internal power, modified by different circumstances either of the individual or of society. It was so in the age of Pericles; I mean the interval which intervened between the birth of that great man and the death of Aristotle; undoubtedly, whether considered in itself, or with reference to the effects which it produced upon the subsequent destinies of civilised man, the most memorable in the history of the world.'

'And yet the age of Pericles has passed away,' said Lord Cadurcis, mournfully, 'and I have gazed upon the mouldering Parthenon. O Herbert! you are a great thinker and muse deeply; solve me the problem why so unparalleled a progress was made during that period in literature and the arts, and why that

progress, so rapid and so sustained, so soon received a check and became retrograde?'

'It is a problem left to the wonder and conjecture of posterity,' said Herbert. 'But its solution, perhaps, may principally be found in the weakness of their political institutions. Nothing of the Athenians remains except their genius; but they fulfilled their purpose. The wrecks and fragments of their subtle and profound minds obscurely suggest to us the grandeur and perfection of the whole. Their language excels every other tongue of the Western world; their sculptures baffle all subsequent artists; credible witnesses assure us that their paintings were not inferior; and we are only accustomed to consider the painters of Italy as those who have brought the art to its highest perfection, because none of the ancient pictures have been preserved. Yet of all their fine arts, it was music of which the Greeks were themselves most proud. Its traditionary effects were far more powerful than any which we experience from the compositions of our times. And now for their poetry, Cadurcis. It is in poetry, and poetry alone, that modern nations have maintained the majesty of genius. Do we equal the Greeks? Do we even excel them?'

'Let us prove the equality first,' said Cadurcis. 'The Greeks excelled in every species of poetry. In some we do not even attempt to rival them. We have not a single modern ode, or a single modern pastoral. We have no one to place by Pindar, or the exquisite Theocritus. As for the epic, I confess myself a heretic as to Homer; I look upon the Iliad as a remnant of national songs; the wise ones agree that the Odyssey is the work of a later age. My instinct agrees with the result of their researches. I credit

their conclusion. The Paradise Lost is, doubtless, a great production, but the subject is monkish. Dante is national, but he has all the faults of a barbarous age. In general the modern epic is framed upon the assumption that the Iliad is an orderly composition. They are indebted for this fallacy to Virgil, who called order out of chaos; but the Æneid, all the same, appears to me an insipid creation. And now for the drama. You will adduce Shakespeare?'

'There are passages in Dante,' said Herbert, 'not inferior, in my opinion, to any existing literary composition, but, as a whole, I will not make my stand on him; I am not so clear that, as a lyric poet, Petrarch may not rival the Greeks. Shakespeare I esteem of ineffable merit.'

'And who is Shakespeare?' said Cadurcis. 'We know of him as much as we do of Homer. Did he write half the plays attributed to him? Did he ever write a single whole play? I doubt it. He appears to me to have been an inspired adapter for the theatres, which were then not as good as barns. I take him to have been a botcher-up of old plays. His popularity is of modern date, and it may not last; it would have surprised him marvellously. Heaven knows, at present, all that bears his name is alike admired; and a regular Shakespearian falls into ecstasies with trash which deserves a niche in the Dunciad. For my part, I abhor your irregular geniuses, and I love to listen to the little nightingale of Twickenham.'

'I have often observed,' said Herbert, 'that writers of an unbridled imagination themselves, admire those whom the world, erroneously, in my opinion, and from a confusion of ideas, esteems correct. I am my-

self an admirer of Pope, though I certainly should not ever think of classing him among the great creative spirits. And you, you are the last poet in the world, Cadurcis, whom one would have fancied his votary.'

'I have written like a boy,' said Cadurcis. 'I found the public bite, and so I baited on with tainted meat. I have never written for fame, only for notoriety; but I am satiated; I am going to turn over a new leaf.'

'For myself,' said Herbert, 'if I ever had the power to impress my creations on my fellow-men, the inclination is gone, and perhaps the faculty is extinct. My career is over; perhaps a solitary echo from my lyre may yet, at times, linger about the world like a breeze that has lost its way. But there is a radical fault in my poetic mind, and I am conscious of it. I am not altogether void of the creative faculty, but mine is a fragmentary mind; I produce no whole. Unless you do this, you cannot last; at least, you cannot materially affect your species. But what I admire in you, Cadurcis, is that, with all the faults of youth, of which you will free yourself, your creative power is vigorous, prolific, and complete; your creations rise fast and fair, like perfect worlds.'

'Well, we will not compliment each other,' said Cadurcis; 'for, after all, it is a miserable craft. What is poetry but a lie, and what are poets but liars?'

'You are wrong, Cadurcis,' said Herbert, 'poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world.'

'I see the towers of Porto Venere,' said Cadurcis directing the sail; 'we shall soon be on shore. I think, too, I recognise Venetia. Ah! my dear Herbert, your daughter is a poem that beats all our inspiration!'

CHAPTER LXXVII.

A White Squall.

ONE circumstance alone cast a gloom over this happy family, and that was the approaching departure of Captain Cadurcis for England. This had been often postponed, but it could be postponed no longer. Not even the entreaties of those kind friends could any longer prevent what was inevitable. The kind heart, the sweet temper, and the lively and companionable qualities of Captain Cadurcis, had endeared him to everyone; all felt that his departure would occasion a blank in their life, impossible to be supplied. It reminded the Herberts also painfully of their own situation, in regard to their native country, which they were ever unwilling to dwell upon. George talked of returning to them, but the prospect was necessarily vague; they felt that it was only one of those fanciful visions with which an affectionate spirit attempts to soothe the pang of separation. His position, his duties, all the projects of his life, bound him to England, from which, indeed, he had been too long absent. It was selfish to wish that, for their sakes, he should sink down into a mere idler in Italy;

and yet, when they recollected how little his future life could be connected with their own, everyone felt dispirited.

'I shall not go boating to-day,' said George to Venetia; 'it is my last day. Mr. Herbert and Plantagenet talk of going to Lavenza; let us take a stroll together.'

Nothing can be refused to those we love on the last day, and Venetia immediately acceded to his request. In the course of the morning, therefore, herself and George quitted the valley, in the direction of the coast towards Genoa. Many a white sail glittered on the blue waters; it was a lively and cheering scene; but both Venetia and her companion were depressed.

'I ought to be happy,' said George, and sighed. 'The fondest wish of my heart is attained. You remember our conversation on the Lago Maggiore, Venetia? You see I was a prophet, and you will be Lady Cadurcis yet.'

'We must keep up our spirits,' said Venetia; 'I do not despair of our all returning to England yet. So many wonders have happened, that I cannot persuade myself that this marvel will not also occur. I am sure my uncle will do something; I have a secret idea that the Bishop is all this time working for papa; I feel assured I shall see Cherbury and Cadurcis again, and Cadurcis will be your home.'

'A year ago you appeared dying, and Plantagenet was the most miserable of men,' said Captain Cadurcis. 'You are both now perfectly well and perfectly happy, living even under the same roof, soon, I feel, to be united, and with the cordial approbation of Lady Annabel. Your father is restored to you. Every

blessing in the world seems to cluster round your roof. It is selfish for me to wear a gloomy countenance.'

'Ah! dear George, you never can be selfish,' said Venetia.

'Yes, I am selfish, Venetia. What else can make me sad?'

'You know how much you contribute to our happiness,' said Venetia, 'and you feel for our sufferings at your absence.'

'No, Venetia, I feel for myself,' said Captain Cadurcis with energy; 'I am certain that I never can be happy, except in your society and Plantagenet's. I cannot express to you how I love you both. Nothing else gives me the slightest interest.'

'You must go home and marry,' said Venetia, smiling. 'You must marry an heiress.'

'Never,' said Captain Cadurcis. 'Nothing shall ever induce me to marry. No! all my dreams are confined to being the bachelor uncle of the family.'

'Well, now I think,' said Venetia, 'of all the persons I know, there is no one so qualified for domestic happiness as yourself. I think your wife, George, would be a very fortunate woman, and I only wish I had a sister, that you might marry her.'

'I wish you had, Venetia; I would give up my resolution against marriage directly.'

'Alas!' said Venetia, 'there is always some bitter drop in the cup of life. Must you indeed go, George?'

'My present departure is inevitable,' he replied; 'but I have some thoughts of giving up my profession and Parliament, and then I will return, never to leave you again.'

'What will Lord —— say? That will never do,' said Venetia. 'No; I should not be content unless you prospered in the world, George. You are made to prosper, and I should be miserable if you sacrificed your existence to us. You must go home, and you must marry, and write letters to us by every post, and tell us what a happy man you are. The best thing for you to do would be to live with your wife at the Abbey; or Cherbury, if you liked. You see I settle everything.'

'I never will marry,' said Captain Cadurcis, seriously.

'Yes you will,' said Venetia.

'I am quite serious, Venetia. Now, mark my words, and remember this day. I never will marry. I have a reason, and a strong and good one, for my resolution.'

'What is it?'

'Because my marriage will destroy the intimacy that subsists between me and yourself, and Plantagenet,' he added.

'Your wife should be my friend,' said Venetia.

'Happy woman!' said George.

'Let us indulge for a moment in a dream of domestic bliss,' said Venetia gaily. 'Papa and mamma at Cherbury; Plantagenet and myself at the Abbey, where you and your wife must remain until we could build you a house; and Dr. Masham coming down to spend Christmas with us. Would it not be delightful? I only hope Plantagenet would be tame. I think he would burst out a little sometimes.'

'Not with you, Venetia, not with you,' said George; 'you have a hold over him which nothing can ever shake. I could always put him in an amiable mood in an instant by mentioning your name.'

'I wish you knew the Abbey, George,' said Venetia. 'It is the most interesting of all old places. I love it. You must promise me when you arrive in England to go on a pilgrimage to Cadurcis and Cherbury, and write me a long account of it.'

'I will indeed; I will write to you very often.'

'You shall find me a most faithful correspondent, which, I dare say, Plantagenet would not prove.'

'Oh! I beg your pardon,' said George; 'you have no idea of the quantity of letters he wrote me when he first quitted England. And such delightful ones! I do not think there is a more lively letter-writer in the world! His descriptions are so vivid; a few touches give you a complete picture; and then his observations, they are so playful! I assure you there is nothing in the world more easy and diverting than a letter from Plantagenet.'

'If you could only see his first letter from Eton to me,' said Venetia. 'I have always treasured it. It certainly was not very diverting; and, if by easy you mean easy to decipher,' she added laughing, 'his handwriting must have improved very much lately. Dear Plantagenet, I am always afraid I never pay him sufficient respect; that I do not feel sufficient awe in his presence; but I cannot disconnect him from the playfellow of my infancy; and, do you know, it seems to me, whenever he addresses me, his voice and air change, and assume quite the tone and manner of childhood.'

'I have never known him but as a great man,' said Captain Cadurcis; 'but he was so frank and simple with me from the very first, that I cannot believe that it is not two years since we first met.'

'Ah! I shall never forget that night at Ranelagh,' said Venetia, half with a smile and half with a sigh.

'How interesting he looked! I loved to see the people stare at him, and to hear them whisper his name.'

Here they seated themselves by a fountain, overshadowed by a plane-tree, and for a while talked only of Plantagenet.

'All the dreams of my life have come to pass,' said Venetia. 'I remember when I was at Weymouth, ill and not very happy, I used to roam about the sands, thinking of papa, and how I wished Plantagenet was like him, a great man, a great poet, whom all the world admired. Little did I think that, before a year had passed, Plantagenet, my unknown Plantagenet, would be the admiration of England; little did I think another year would pass, and I should be living with my father and Plantagenet together, and they should be bosom friends. You see, George, we must never despair.'

'Under this bright sun,' said Captain Cadurcis, 'one is naturally sanguine, but think of me alone and in gloomy England.'

'It is indeed a bright sun,' said Venetia; 'how wonderful to wake every morning, and be sure of meeting its beam.'

Captain Cadurcis looked around him with a sailor's eye. Over the Apennines, towards Genoa, there was a ridge of dark clouds piled up with such compactness, that they might have been mistaken in a hasty survey for part of the mountains themselves.

'Bright as is the sun,' said Captain Cadurcis, 'we may have yet a squall before night.'

'I was delighted with Venice,' said his companion, not noticing his observation; 'I think of all places in the world it is one which Plantagenet would most

admire. I cannot believe but that even his delicious Athens would yield to it.'

'He did lead the oddest life at Athens you can conceive,' said Captain Cadurcis. 'The people did not know what to make of him. He lived in the Latin convent, a fine building which he had almost to himself, for there are not half a dozen monks. He used to pace up and down the terrace which he had turned into a garden, and on which he kept all sorts of strange animals. He wrote continually there. Indeed he did nothing but write. His only relaxation was a daily ride to Piræus, about five miles over the plain; he told me it was the only time in his life he was ever contented with himself except when he was at Cherbury. He always spoke of London with disgust.'

'Plantagenet loves retirement and a quiet life,' said Venetia; 'but he must not be marred with vulgar sights and commonplace duties. That is the secret with him.'

'I think the wind has just changed,' said Captain Cadurcis. 'It seems to me that we shall have a sirocco. There, it shifts again! We shall have a sirocco for certain.'

'What did you think of papa when you first saw him?' said Venetia. 'Was he the kind of person you expected to see?'

'Exactly,' said Captain Cadurcis. 'So very spiritual! Plantagenet said to me, as we went home the first night, that he looked like a golden phantom. I think him very like you, Venetia; indeed, there can be no doubt you inherited your face from your father.'

'Ah! if you had seen his portrait at Cherbury, when he was only twenty!' said Venetia. 'That

was a golden phantom, or rather he looked like Hyperion. What are you staring at so, George?'

'I do not like this wind,' muttered Captain Cadurcis. 'There it goes.'

'You cannot see the wind, George?

'Yes, I can, Venetia, and I do not like it at all. Do you see that black spot flitting like a shade over the sea? It is like the reflection of a cloud on the water; but there is no cloud. Well, that is the wind, Venetia, and a very wicked wind too.'

'How strange! Is that indeed the wind?'

'We had better return home,' said Captain Cadurcis. 'I wish they had not gone to Lavenza.'

'But there is no danger?' said Venetia.

'Danger? No!—no danger, but they may get a wet jacket.'

They walked on; but Captain Cadurcis was rather distrait: his eye was always watching the wind; at last he said, 'I tell you, Venetia, we must walk quickly; for, by Jove, we are going to have a white squall.'

They hurried their pace, Venetia mentioned her alarm again about the boat; but her companion reassured her; yet his manner was not so confident as his words.

A white mist began to curl above the horizon, the blueness of the day seemed suddenly to fade, and its colour became grey; there was a swell on the waters that hitherto had been quite glassy, and they were covered with a scurfy foam.

'I wish I had been with them,' said Captain Cadurcis, evidently very anxious.

'George, you are alarmed,' said Venetia, earnestly. 'I am sure there is danger.'

'Danger! How can there be danger, Venetia? Perhaps they are in port by this time. I dare say we shall find them at Spezzia. I will see you home and run down to them. Only hurry, for your own sake, for you do not know what a white squall in the Mediterranean is. We have but a few moments.'

And even at this very instant, the wind came roaring and rushing with such a violent gush that Venetia could scarcely stand; George put his arm round her to support her. The air was filled with thick white vapour, so that they could no longer see the ocean, only the surf rising very high all along the coast.

'Keep close to me, Venetia,' said Captain Cadurcis; 'hold my arm and I will walk first, for we shall not be able to see a yard before us in a minute. I know where we are. We are above the olive wood, and we shall soon be in the ravine. These Mediterranean white squalls are nasty things; I had sooner by half be in a south-wester; for one cannot run before the wind in this bay, the reefs stretch such a long way out.'

The danger, and the inutility of expressing fears which could only perplex her guide, made Venetia silent, but she was terrified. She could not divest herself of apprehension about her father and Plantagenet. In spite of all he said, it was evident that her companion was alarmed.

They had now entered the valley; the mountains had in some degree kept off the vapour; the air was more clear. Venetia and Captain Cadurcis stopped a moment to breathe. 'Now, Venetia, you are safe,' said Captain Cadurcis. 'I will not come in; I will run down to the bay at once.' He wiped the mist off his face: Venetia perceived him deadly pale.

'George,' she said, 'conceal nothing from me; there is danger, imminent danger. Tell me at once.'

'Indeed, Venetia,' said Captain Cadurcis, 'I am sure everything will be quite right. There is some danger, certainly, at this moment; but of course, long ago they have run into harbour. I have no doubt they are at Spezzia at this moment. Now, do not be alarmed; indeed there is no cause. God bless you!' he said, and bounded away. 'No cause,' thought he to himself, as the wind sounded like thunder, and the vapour came rushing up the ravine. 'God grant I may be right; but neither between the Tropics nor on the Line have I witnessed a severer squall than this! What open boat can live in this weather? Oh! that I had been with them. I shall never forgive myself!'

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

Apprehension.

ENETIA found her mother walking up and down the room, as was her custom when she was agitated. She hurried to her daughter. 'You must change your dress instantly, Venetia,' said Lady Annabel. 'Where is George?'

'He has gone down to Spezzia to papa and Plantagenet; it is a white squall; it comes on very suddenly in this sea. He ran down to Spezzia instantly because he thought they would be wet,' said the agitated Venetia, speaking with rapidity and trying to appear calm.

'Are they at Spezzia?' inquired Lady Annabel, quickly.

'George has no doubt they are, mother,' said Venetia.

'No doubt!' exclaimed Lady Annabel, in great distress. 'God grant they may be only wet.'

'Dearest mother,' said Venetia, approaching her, but speech deserted her. She had advanced to encourage Lady Annabel, but her own fear checked the words on her lips.

'Change your dress, Venetia,' said Lady Annabel; 'lose no time in doing that. I think I will send down to Spezzia at once.'

'That is useless now, dear mother, for George is there.'

'Go, dearest,' said Lady Annabel; 'I dare say, we have no cause for fear, but I am exceedingly alarmed about your father, about them: I am indeed. I do not like these sudden squalls, and I never liked this boating; indeed, I never did. George being with them reconciled me to it. Now go, Venetia; go, my love.'

Venetia quitted the room. She was so agitated that she made Pauncefort the confidante of her apprehensions.

'La! my dear miss,' said Mistress Pauncefort, 'I should never have thought of such a thing! Do not you remember what the old man said at Weymouth, "There is many a boat will live in a rougher sea than a ship;" and it is such an unlikely thing, it is indeed, Miss Venetia. I am certain sure my lord can manage a boat as well as a common sailor, and master is hardly less used to it than he. La! miss, don't make yourself nervous about any such preposterous ideas. And I dare say you will find them in the saloon when you go down again. Really I should not wonder. I think you had better wear your twill dress; I have put the new trimming on.'

They had not returned when Venetia joined her mother. That indeed she could scarcely expect. But, in about half an hour, a message arrived from Captain Cadurcis that they were not at Spezzia, but from something he had heard, he had no doubt they were at Sarzana, and he was going to ride on there

at once. He felt sure, however, from what he had heard, they were at Sarzana. This communication afforded Lady Annabel a little ease, but Venetia's heart misgave her. She recalled the alarm of George in the morning, which it was impossible for him to disguise, and she thought she recognised in this hurried message and vague assurances of safety something of the same apprehension, and the same fruitless efforts to conceal it.

Now came the time of terrible suspense. Sarzana was nearly twenty miles distant from Spezzia. The evening must arrive before they could receive intelligence from Captain Cadurcis. In the meantime the squall died away, the heavens became again bright, and, though the waves were still tumultuous, the surf was greatly decreased. Lady Annabel had already sent down more than one messenger to the bay, but they brought no intelligence; she resolved now to go herself, that she might have the satisfaction of herself cross-examining the fishermen who had been driven in from various parts by stress of weather. She would not let Venetia accompany her, who, she feared, might already suffer from the exertions and rough weather of the morning. This was a most anxious hour, and yet the absence of her mother was in some degree a relief to Venetia; it at least freed her from the perpetual effort of assumed composure.

While her mother remained, Venetia had affected to read, though her eye wandered listlessly over the page, or to draw, though the pencil trembled in her hand; anything which might guard her from conveying to her mother that she shared the apprehensions which had already darkened her mother's mind. But now that Lady Annabel was gone, Venetia, muffling

herself up in her shawl, threw herself on a sofa, and there she remained without a thought, her mind a chaos of terrible images.

Her mother returned, and with a radiant countenance. Venetia sprang from the sofa. 'There is good news; O mother! have they returned?'

'They are not at Spezzia,' said Lady Annabel, throwing herself into a chair panting for breath; 'but there is good news. You see I was right to go, Venetia. These stupid people we send only ask questions, and take the first answer. I have seen a fisherman, and he says he heard that two persons, Englishmen he believes, have put into Lerici in an open boat.'

'God be praised!' said Venetia. 'O mother, I can now confess to you the terror I have all along felt.'

'My own heart assures me of it, my child,' said Lady Annabel weeping; and they mingled their tears together, but tears not of sorrow.

'Poor George!' said Lady Annabel, 'he will have a terrible journey to Sarzana, and be feeling so much for us! Perhaps he may meet them.'

'I feel assured he will,' said Venetia; 'and perhaps ere long they will all three be here again. Joy! joy!'

'They must never go in that boat again,' said Lady Annabel.

'Oh! they never will, dearest mother, if you ask them not,' said Venetia.

'We will send to Lerici,' said Lady Annabel.

'Instantly,' said Venetia; 'but I dare say they have already sent us a messenger.'

'No!' said Lady Annabel; 'men treat the danger that is past very lightly. We shall not hear from them except in person.'

Time now flew more lightly. They were both easy in their minds. The messenger was despatched to Lerici; but even Lerici was a considerable distance, and hours must elapse before his return. Still there was the hope of seeing them, or hearing from them in the interval.

'I must go out, dear mother,' said Venetia. 'Let us both go out. It is now very fine. Let us go just to the ravine, for indeed it is impossible to remain here.'

Accordingly they both went forth, and took up a position on the coast which commanded a view on all sides. All was radiant again, and comparatively calm. Venetia looked upon the sea, and said, 'Ah! I never shall forget a white squall in the Mediterranean, for all this splendour.'

It was sunset: they returned home. No news yet from Lerici. Lady Annabel grew uneasy again. The pensive and melancholy hour encouraged gloom; but Venetia, who was sanguine, encouraged her mother.

'Suppose they were not Englishmen in the boat,' said Lady Annabel.

'It is impossible, mother. What other two persons in this neighbourhood could have been in an open boat? Besides, the man said Englishmen. You remember, he said Englishmen. You are quite sure he did? It must be they. I feel as convinced of it as of your presence.'

'I think there can be no doubt,' said Lady Annabel. 'I wish that the messenger would return.'

The messenger did return. No two persons in an open boat had put into Lerici; but a boat, like the one described, with every stitch of canvas set, had passed Lerici just before the squall commenced, and, the people there doubted not, had made Sarzana.

Lady Annabel turned pale, but Venetia was still sanguine. 'They are at Sarzana,' she said; 'they must be at Sarzana; you see George was right. He said he was sure they were at Sarzana. Besides, dear mother, he heard they were at Sarzana.'

'And we heard they were at Lerici,' said Lady Annabel in a melancholy tone.

'And so they were, dear mother; it all agrees. The accounts are consistent. Do not you see how very consistent they are? They were seen at Lerici, and were off Lerici, but they made Sarzana; and George heard they were at Sarzana. I am certain they are at Sarzana. I feel quite easy; I feel as easy as if they were here. They are safe at Sarzana. But it is too far to return to-night. We shall see them at breakfast to-morrow, all three.'

'Venetia, dearest! do not you sit up,' said her mother. 'I think there is a chance of George returning; I feel assured he will send to-night; but late, of course. Go, dearest, and sleep.'

'Sleep!' thought Venetia to herself; but to please her mother she retired.

'Good-night, my child,' said Lady Annabel. 'The moment any one arrives, you shall be aroused.'

CHAPTER LXXIX.

The Dread Messenger.

VENETIA, without undressing, lay down on her bed, watching for some sound that might give her hope of George's return. Dwelling on every instant, the time dragged heavily along, and she thought that the night had half passed when Pauncefort entered her room, and she learnt, to her surprise, that only an hour had elapsed since she had parted from her mother. This entrance of Pauncefort had given Venetia a momentary hope that they had returned.

'I assure you, Miss Venetia, it is only an hour,' said Pauncefort, 'and nothing could have happened. Now do try to go to sleep, that is a dear young lady, for I am certain sure that they will all return in the morning, as I am here. I was telling my lady just now, I said, says I, "I dare say they are all very wet, and very fatigued."'

'They would have returned, Pauncefort,' said Venetia, 'or they would have sent. They are not at Sarzana.'

'La! Miss Venetia, why should they be at Sarzana? Why should they not have gone much farther on!

For, as Vicenzo was just saying to me, and Vicenzo knows all about the coast, with such a wind as this, I should not be surprised if they were at Leghorn.'

'O Pauncefort!' said Venetia, 'I am sick at heart!'

'Now really, Miss Venetia, do not take on so!' said Pauncefort; 'for do not you remember when his lordship ran away from the abbey, and went a gipsying, nothing would persuade poor Mrs. Cadurcis that he was not robbed and murdered, and yet you see he was as safe and sound all the time, as if he had been at Cherbury.'

'Does Vicenzo really think they could have reached Leghorn?' said Venetia, clinging to every fragment of hope.

'He is morally sure of it, Miss Venetia,' said Pauncefort, 'and I feel quite as certain, for Vicenzo is always right.'

'I had confidence about Sarzana,' said Venetia; 'I really did believe they were at Sarzana. If only Captain Cadurcis would return; if he only would return, and say they were not at Sarzana, I would try to believe they were at Leghorn.'

'Now, Miss Venetia,' said Pauncefort, 'I am certain sure that they are quite safe; for my lord is a very good sailor; he is, indeed; all the men say so; and the boat is as seaworthy a boat as boat can be. There is not the slightest fear, I do assure you, miss.'

'Do the men say that Plantagenet is a good sailor?' inquired Venetia.

'Quite professional!' said Mistress Pauncefort; 'and can command a ship as well as the best of them. They all say that.'

'Hush! Pauncefort, I hear something.'

'It's only my lady, miss. I know her step.'

'Is my mother going to bed?' said Venetia.

'Yes,' said Pauncefort, 'my lady sent me here to see after you. I wish I could tell her you were asleep.'

'It is impossible to sleep,' said Venetia, rising up from the bed, withdrawing the curtain, and looking at the sky. 'What a peaceful night! I wish my heart were like the sky. I think I will go to mamma, Pauncefort!'

'Oh! dear, Miss Venetia, I am sure I think you had better not. If you and my lady, now, would only just go to sleep, and forget every thing till morning, it would be much better for you. Besides, I am sure if my lady knew you were not gone to bed already, it would only make her doubly anxious. Now, really, Miss Venetia, do take my advice, and just lie down again. You may be sure the moment any one arrives I will let you know. Indeed, I shall go and tell my lady that you are lying down as it is, and very drowsy;' and, so saying, Mistress Pauncefort caught up her candle, and bustled out of the room.

Venetia took up the volume of her father's poems, which Cadurcis had filled with his notes. How little did Plantagenet anticipate, when he thus expressed at Athens the passing impressions of his mind, that, ere a year had glided away, his fate would be so intimately blended with that of Herbert! It was impossible, however, for Venetia to lose herself in a volume which, under any other circumstances, might have compelled her spirit! The very associations with the writers added to the terrible restlessness of her mind. She paused each instant to listen for the

wished-for sound, but a mute stillness reigned throughout the house and household. There was something in this deep, unbroken silence, at a moment when anxiety was universally diffused among the dwellers beneath that roof, and the heart of more than one of them was throbbing with all the torture of the most awful suspense, that fell upon Venetia's excited nerves with a very painful and even insufferable influence. She longed for sound, for some noise that might assure her she was not the victim of a trance.

She closed her volume with such energy that she started at the sound she had herself created. She rose and opened the door of her chamber very softly, and walked into the vestibule. There were caps, and cloaks, and whips, and canes of Cadurcis and her father, lying about in familiar confusion. It seemed impossible but that they were sleeping, as usual, under the same roof. And where were they? That she should live and be unable to answer that terrible question! When she felt the utter helplessness of all her strong sympathy towards them, it seemed to her that she must go mad. She gazed around her with a wild and vacant stare. At the bottom of her heart there was a fear maturing into conviction too horrible for expression. She returned to her own chamber, and the exhaustion occasioned by her anxiety and the increased coolness of the night made her at length drowsy. She threw herself on the bed and slumbered.

She started in her sleep, she awoke, she dreamed they had come home. She rose and looked at the progress of the night. The night was waning fast; a grey light was on the landscape; the point of day

approached. Venetia stole softly to her mother's room, and entered it with a soundless step. Lady Annabel had not retired to bed. She had sat up the whole night, and was now asleep. A lamp on a small table was burning at her side, and she held, firmly grasped in her hand, the letter of her husband, which he had addressed to her at Venice, and which she had been evidently reading. A tear glided down the cheek of Venetia as she watched her mother retaining that letter with fondness even in her sleep, and when she thought of all the misery, and heart-aches, and harrowing hours that had preceded its receipt, and which Venetia believed that letter had cured for ever. What misery awaited them now? Why were they watchers of the night? She shuddered when these dreadful questions flitted through her mind. She shuddered and sighed. Her mother started, and woke.

'Who is there?' inquired Lady Annabel.

'Venetia.'

'My child, have you not slept?'

'Yes, mother, and I woke refreshed, as I hope you do.'

'I wake with trust in God's mercy,' said Lady Annabel. 'Tell me the hour.'

'It is just upon dawn, mother.'

'Dawn! no one has returned, or come.'

'The house is still, mother.'

'I would you were in bed, my child.'

'Mother, I can sleep no more. I wish to be with you;' and Venetia seated herself at her mother's feet, and reclined her head upon her mother's knee.

'I am glad the night has passed, Venetia,' said Lady Annabel, in a suppressed yet solemn tone. 'It

has been a trial.' And here she placed the letter in her bosom. Venetia could only answer with a sigh.

'I wish Pauncefort would come,' said Lady Annabel; 'and yet I do not like to rouse her, she was up so late, poor creature! If it be the dawn I should like to send out messengers again; something may be heard at Spezzia.'

'Vicenzo thinks they have gone to Leghorn, mother.'

'Has he heard anything?' said Lady Annabel, eagerly.

'No, but he is an excellent judge,' said Venetia, repeating all Pauncefort's consolatory chatter. 'He knows the coast so well. He says he is sure the wind would carry them on to Leghorn; and that accounts, you know, mother, for George not returning. They are all at Leghorn.'

'Would that George would return,' murmured Lady Annabel; 'I wish I could see again that sailor who said they were at Lerici. He was an intelligent man.'

'Perhaps if we send down to the bay he may be there,' said Venetia.

'Hush! I hear a step!' said Lady Annabel.

Venetia sprung up and opened the door, but it was only Pauncefort in the vestibule.

'The household are all up, my lady,' said that important personage entering; ''tis a beautiful morning. Vicenzo has run down to the bay, my lady; I sent him off immediately. Vincenzo says he is certain sure they are at Leghorn, my lady; and, this time three years, the very same thing happened. They were fishing for anchovies, my lady, close by, my lady, near Sarzana; two young men, or rather one

about the same age as master, and one like my lord; cousins, my lady, and just in the same sort of boat, my lady; and there came on a squall, just the same sort of a squall, my lady; and they did not return home; and everyone was frightened out of their wits, my lady, and their wives and families quite distracted; and after all they were at Leghorn; for this sort of wind always takes your open boats to Leghorn, Vicenzo says.'

The sun rose, the household were all stirring, and many of them abroad; the common routine of domestic duty seemed, by some general yet not expressed understanding, to have ceased. The ladies descended at a very early hour, and went forth into the valley, once the happy valley. What was to be its future denomination? Vicenzo returned from the bay, and he contrived to return with cheering intelligence. The master of a felucca who, in consequence of the squall had put in at Lerici, and in the evening dropped down to Spezzia, had met an open boat an hour before he reached Sarzana, and was quite confident that, if it had put into port, it must have been, from the speed at which it was going, a great distance down the coast. No wrecks had been heard of in the neighbourhood. This intelligence, the gladsome time of day, and the non-arrival of Captain Cadurcis, which according to their mood was always a circumstance that counted either for good or for evil, and the sanguine feelings which make us always cling to hope, altogether reassured our friends. Venetia dismissed from her mind the dark thought which for a moment had haunted her in the noon of night; and still it was a suspense, a painful, agitating suspense, but only suspense that yet influenced them.

'Time!' said Lady Annabel. 'Time! we must wait.'

Venetia consoled her mother; she affected even a gaiety of spirit; she was sure that Vicenzo would turn out to be right, after all; Pauncefort said he always was right, and that they were at Leghorn.

The day wore apace; the noon arrived and passed; it was even approaching sunset. Lady Annabel was almost afraid to counterorder the usual meals, lest Venetia should comprehend her secret terror; the very same sentiment influenced Venetia. Thus they both had submitted to the ceremony of breakfast, but when the hour of dinner approached they could neither endure the mockery. They looked at each other, and almost at the same time they proposed that, instead of dining, they should walk down to the bay.

'I trust we shall at least hear something before the night,' said Lady Annabel. 'I confess I dread the coming night. I do not think I could endure it.'

'The longer we do not hear, the more certain I am of their being at Leghorn,' said Venetia.

'I have a great mind to travel there to-night,' said Lady Annabel.

As they were stepping into the portico, Venetia recognised Captain Cadurcis in the distance. She turned pale; she would have fallen had she not leaned on her mother, who was not so advanced, and who had not seen him.

'What is the matter, Venetia?' said Lady Annabel, alarmed.

'He is here, he is here!'

'Marmion?'

'No, George. Let me sit down.'

Her mother tried to support her to a chair. Lady Annabel took off her bonnet. She had not strength

to walk forth. She could not speak. She sat down opposite Venetia, and her countenance pictured distress to so painful a degree, that at any other time Venetia would have flown to her, but in this crisis of suspense it was impossible. George was in sight; he was in the portico; he was in the room.

He looked wan, haggard, and distracted. More than once he essayed to speak, but failed.

Lady Annabel looked at him with a strange delirious expression. Venetia rushed forward and seized his arm, and gazed intently on his face. He shrank from her glance; his frame trembled.

CHAPTER LXXX.

'Whom the Gods Love Die Young.'

IN THE heart of the tempest Captain Cadurcis traced his way in a sea of vapour with extreme danger and difficulty to the shore. On his arrival at Spezzia, however, scarcely a house was visible, and the only evidence of the situation of the place was the cessation of an immense white surf which otherwise indicated the line of the sea, but the absence of which proved his contiguity to a harbour. In the thick fog he heard the cries and shouts of the returning fishermen, and of their wives and children responding from the land to their exclamations. He was forced, therefore, to wait at Spezzia, in an agony of impotent suspense, until the fury of the storm was over and the sky was partially cleared. At length the objects became gradually less obscure; he could trace the outline of the houses, and catch a glimpse of the water half a mile out, and soon the old castles which guard the entrance of the strait that leads into the gulf, looming in the distance, and now and then a group of human beings in the vanishing vapour.

Of these he made inquiries, but in vain, respecting the boat and his friends. He then made the brig, but

could learn nothing except their departure in the morning. He at length obtained a horse and galloped along the coast towards Lerici, keeping a sharp look out as he proceeded, and stopping at every village in his progress for intelligence. When he had arrived in the course of three hours at Lerici, the storm had abated, the sky was clear, and no evidence of the recent squall remained except the agitated state of the waves. At Lerici he could hear nothing, so he hurried on to Sarzana, where he learnt for the first time that an open boat, with its sails set, had passed more than an hour before the squall commenced.

From Sarzana he hastened on to Lavenza, the nearest sea-point to Massa, and where the Carrara marble is shipped for England. Here also his inquiries were fruitless, and, exhausted by his exertions, he dismounted and rested at the inn, not only for repose, but to consider over the course which he should now pursue. The boat had not been seen off Lavenza, and the idea that they had made the coast towards Leghorn now occurred to him. His horse was so wearied that he was obliged to stop some time at Lavenza, for he could procure no other mode of conveyance; the night also was fast coming on, and to proceed to Leghorn by this dangerous route at this hour was impossible. At Lavenza therefore he remained, resolved to hasten to Leghorn at dawn.

This was a most awful night. Although mentally and physically exhausted, Captain Cadurcis could not sleep, and, after some vain efforts, he quitted his restless bed on which he had laid down without undressing, and walked forth to the harbour. Between anxiety for Herbert and his cousin, and for the unhappy women whom he had left behind, he was nearly dis-

tracted. He gazed on the sea, as if some sail in sight might give him a chance of hope. His professional experience assured him of all the danger of the squall. He could not conceive how an open boat could live in such a sea, and an instant return to port so soon as the squall commenced, appeared the only chance of its salvation. Could they have reached Leghorn? It seemed impossible. There was no hope they could now be at Sarzana, or Lerici. When he contemplated the full contingency of what might have occurred, his mind wandered, and refused to comprehend the possibility of the terrible conclusion. He thought the morning would never break.

There was a cavernous rock by the seashore, that jutted into the water like a small craggy promontory. Captain Cadurcis climbed to its top, and then descending, reclined himself upon an inferior portion of it, which formed a natural couch with the wave on each side. There, lying at his length, he gazed upon the moon and stars whose brightness he thought would never dim. The Mediterranean is a tideless sea, but the swell of the waves, which still set in to the shore, bore occasionally masses of sea-weed and other marine formations, and deposited them around him, plashing, as it broke against the shore, with a melancholy and monotonous sound. The abstraction of the scene, the hour, and the surrounding circumstances brought, however, no refreshment to the exhausted spirit of George Cadurcis.

He could not, did not dare to think; but the villa in the Apennines and the open boat in the squall flitted continually before him. His mind was feeble though excited, and he fell into a restless and yet unmeaning reverie. As long as he had been in action,

as long as he had been hurrying along the coast, the excitement of motion, the constant exercise of his senses, had relieved or distracted the intolerable suspense. But this pause, this inevitable pause, overwhelmed him. It oppressed his spirit like eternity. And yet what might the morning bring? He almost wished that he might remain for ever on this rock watching the moon and stars, and that the life of the world might never recommence.

He started; he had fallen into a light slumber; he had been dreaming; he thought he had heard the voice of Venetia calling him; he had forgotten where he was; he stared at the sea and sky, and recalled his dreadful consciousness. The wave broke with a heavy plash that attracted his attention: it was, indeed, that sound that had awakened him. He looked around; there was some object; he started wildly from his resting-place, sprang over the cavern, and bounded on the beach. It was a corpse; he is kneeling by its side. It is the corpse of his cousin! Lord Cadurcis was a fine swimmer, and had evidently made strong efforts for his life, for he was partly undressed.

In all the insanity of hope, still wilder than despair, George Cadurcis seized the body and bore it some yards upon the shore. Life had been long extinct. The corpse was cold and stark, the eyes closed, an expression of energy, however, yet lingering in the fixed jaw, and the hair sodden with the sea. Suddenly Captain Cadurcis rushed to the inn and roused the household. With a distracted air, and broken speech and rapid motion, he communicated the catastrophe. Several persons, some bearing torches, others blankets and cordials, followed him instantly to the fatal spot. They hurried to the body, they applied all

the rude remedies of the moment, rather from the impulse of nervous excitement than with any practical purpose; for the case had been indeed long hopeless. While Captain Cadurcis leant over the body, chafing the extremities in a hurried frenzy, and gazing intently on the countenance, a shout was heard from one of the stragglers who had recently arrived. The sea had washed on the beach another corpse: the form of Marmion Herbert. It would appear that he had made no struggle to save himself, for his hand was locked in his waistcoat, where, at the moment, he had thrust the Phædo, showing that he had been reading to the last, and was meditating on immortality when he died.

CHAPTER LXXXI.

A Sad Home-Coming.

T WAS the commencement of autumn. The verdure of summer still lingered on the trees; the sky, if not so cloudless, was almost as refulgent as Italy; and the pigeons, bright and glancing, clustered on the roof of the hall of Cherbury. The steward was in attendance; the household, all in deep mourning, were assembled; everything was in readiness for the immediate arrival of Lady Annabel Herbert.

'"Tis nearly four years come Martinmas,' said the grey-headed butler, 'since my lady left us.'

'And no good has come of it,' said the housekeeper. 'And for my part I never heard of good coming from going to foreign parts.'

'I shall like to see Miss Venetia again,' said a housemaid. 'Bless her sweet face.'

'I never expected to see her Miss Venetia again from all we heard,' said a footman.

'God's will be done!' said the grey-headed butler; 'but I hope she will find happiness at home. "Tis nigh on twenty years since I first cradled her in these arms.'

'I wonder if there is any new Lord Cadurcis,' said the footman. 'I think he was the last of the line.'

'It would have been a happy day if I had lived to have seen the poor young lord marry Miss Venetia,' said the housekeeper. 'I always thought that match was made in heaven.'

'He was a sweet-spoken young gentleman,' said the housemaid.

'For my part,' said the footman, 'I should like to have seen our real master, Squire Herbert. He was a famous gentleman by all accounts.'

'I wish they had lived quietly at home,' said the housekeeper.

'I shall never forget the time when my lord returned,' said the grey-headed butler. 'I must say I thought it was a match.'

'Mistress Pauncefort seemed to think so,' said the housemaid.

'And she understands those things,' said the footman.

'I see the carriage,' said a servant who was at a window in the hall. All immediately bustled about, and the housekeeper sent a message to the steward.

The carriage might be just discovered at the end of the avenue. It was some time before it entered the iron gates that were thrown open for its reception. The steward stood on the steps with his hat off, the servants were ranged in order at the entrance. Touching their horses with the spur, and cracking their whips, the postilions dashed round the circular plot and stopped at the hall-door. Under any circumstances a return home after an interval of years is rather an awful moment; there was not a servant who was not visibly affected. On the outside of the car-

riage were a foreign servant and Mistress Pauncefort, who was not so profuse as might have been expected in her recognitions of her old friends; her countenance was graver than of yore. Misfortune and misery had subdued even Mistress Pauncefort. The foreign servant opened the door of the carriage; a young man, who was a stranger to the household, but who was in deep mourning, alighted, and then Lady Annabel appeared. The steward advanced to welcome her, the household bowed and curtseyed. She smiled on them for a moment graciously and kindly, but her countenance immediately reassumed a serious air, and whispering one word to the strange gentleman, she entered the hall alone, inviting the steward to follow her.

'I hope your ladyship is well; welcome home, my lady; welcome again to Cherbury; a welcome return, my lady; hope Miss Venetia is quite well; happy to see your ladyship amongst us again, and Miss Venetia, too, my lady.' Lady Annabel acknowledged these salutations with kindness, and then, saying that Miss Herbert was not very well and was fatigued with her journey, she dismissed her humble but trusty friends. Lady Annabel then turned and nodded to her fellow-traveller.

Upon this Lord Cadurcis, if we must indeed use a title from which he himself shrank, carried a shrouded form in his arms into the hall, where the steward alone lingered, though withdrawn to the back part of the scene; and Lady Annabel, advancing to meet him, embraced his treasured burden, her own unhappy child.

'Now, Venetia! dearest Venetia!' she said, ''tis past; we are at home.'

Venetia leant upon her mother, but made no reply. 'Upstairs, dearest,' said Lady Annabel: 'a little exertion, a very little.' Leaning on her mother and Lord Cadurcis, Venetia ascended the staircase, and they reached the terrace-room. Venetia looked around her as she entered the chamber; that scene of her former life, endeared to her by so many happy hours, and so many sweet incidents; that chamber where she had first seen Plantagenet. Lord Cadurcis supported her to a chair, and then, overwhelmed by irresistible emotion, she sank back in a swoon.

No one was allowed to enter the room but Pauncefort. They revived her; Lord Cadurcis holding her hand, and touching, with a watchful finger, her pulse. Venetia opened her eyes, and looked around her. Her mind did not wander; she immediately recognised where she was, and recollected all that had happened. She faintly smiled, and said, in a low voice, 'You are all too kind, and I am very weak. After our trials, what is this, George?' she added, struggling to appear animated; 'you are at length at Cherbury.'

Once more at Cherbury! It was, indeed, an event that recalled a thousand associations. In the wild anguish of her first grief, when the dreadful intelligence was broken to her, if anyone had whispered to Venetia that she would yet find herself once more at Cherbury, she would have esteemed the intimation as mockery. But time and hope will struggle with the most poignant affliction, and their influence is irresistible and inevitable. From her darkened chamber in their Mediterranean villa, Venetia had again come forth, and crossed mountains, and traversed immense plains, and journeyed through many countries.

She could not die, as she had supposed at first that she must, and therefore she had exerted herself to quit, and to quit speedily, a scene so terrible as their late abode. She was the very first to propose their return to England, and to that spot where she had passed her early life, and where she now wished to fulfil, in quiet and seclusion, the allotment of her remaining years; to meditate over the marvellous past, and cherish its sweet and bitter recollections. The native firmness of Lady Annabel, her long exercised control over her emotions, the sadness and subdued tone which the early incidents of her career had cast over her character, her profound sympathy with her daughter, and that religious consolation which never deserted her, had alike impelled and enabled her to bear up against the catastrophe with more fortitude than her child. The arrow, indeed, had struck Venetia with a double barb. She was the victim; and all the cares of Lady Annabel had been directed to soothe and support this stricken lamb.

These unhappy women must have sunk under their unparalleled calamities, had it not been for the devotion of their companion. In the despair of his first emotions, George Cadurcis was nearly plunging himself headlong into the wave that had already proved so fatal to his house. But when he thought of Lady Annabel and Venetia in a foreign land, without a single friend in their desolation, and pictured them to himself with the dreadful news abruptly communicated by some unfeeling stranger; and called upon, in the midst of their overwhelming agony, to attend to all the heart-rending arrangements which the discovery of the bodies of the beings to whom they were devoted, and in whom all their feelings were

centred, must necessarily entail upon them, he recoiled from what seemed to be infamous desertion. He resolved to live, if only in order to preserve them from all their impending troubles, and with the hope that his exertions might tend, in however slight a degree, not to alleviate, for that was impossible; but to prevent the increase of that terrible woe, the very conception of which made his brain stagger. He carried the bodies, therefore, with him to Spezzia, and then prepared for that fatal interview, the commencement of which we first indicated. Yet it must be confessed that, though the bravest of men, his courage faltered as he entered the accustomed ravine. He stopped and looked down on the precipice below; he felt it utterly impossible to meet them; his mind nearly deserted him. Death, some great and universal catastrophe, an earthquake, a deluge, that would have buried them all in an instant and a common fate, would have been hailed by George Cadurcis, at that moment, as good fortune.

He lurked about the ravine for nearly three hours before he could summon up heart for the awful interview. The position he had taken assured him that no one could approach the villa, to which he himself dared not advance. At length, in a paroxysm of energetic despair, he had rushed forward, met them instantly, and confessed with a whirling brain, and almost unconscious of his utterance, that 'they could not hope to see them again in this world.'

What ensued must neither be attempted to be described, nor even remembered. It was one of those tragedies of life which enfeeble the most faithful memories at a blow, shatter nerves beyond the faculty of revival, cloud the mind for ever, or turn the

hair grey in an instant. They carried Venetia delirious to her bed. The very despair, and almost madness, of her daughter forced Lady Annabel to self-exertion of which it was difficult to suppose that even she was capable. And George, too, was obliged to leave them. He stayed only the night. A few words passed between Lady Annabel and himself; she wished the bodies to be embalmed, and borne to England. There was no time to be lost, and there was no one to be entrusted except George. He had to hasten to Genoa to make all these preparations, and for two days he was absent from the villa.

When he returned, Lady Annabel saw him, but Venetia was for a long time invisible. The moment she grew composed, she expressed a wish to her mother instantly to return to Cherbury. All the arrangements necessarily devolved upon George Cadurcis. It was his study that Lady Annabel should be troubled upon no point. The household were discharged, all the affairs were wound up, the felucca hired which was to bear them to Genoa, and in readiness, before he notified to them that the hour of departure had arrived. The most bitter circumstance was looking again upon the sea. It seemed so intolerable to Venetia, that their departure was delayed more than one day in consequence; but it was inevitable; they could reach Genoa in no other manner. George carried Venetia in his arms to the boat, with her face covered with a shawl, and bore her in the same manner to the hotel at Genoa, where their travelling carriage awaited them.

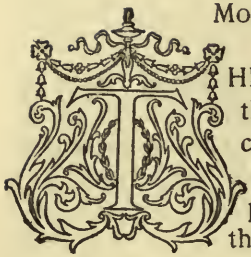
They travelled home rapidly. All seemed to be impelled, as it were, by a restless desire for repose. Cherbury was the only thought on Venetia's mind.

She observed nothing; she made no remark during their journey; they travelled often throughout the night; but no obstacles occurred, no inconveniences. There was one in this miserable society whose only object in life was to support Venetia under her terrible visitation. Silent, but with an eye that never slept, George Cadurcis watched Venetia as a nurse might a child. He read her thoughts, he anticipated her wishes without inquiring them; every arrangement was unobtrusively made that could possibly consult her comfort.

They passed through London without stopping there. George would not leave them for an instant; nor would he spare a thought to his own affairs, though they urgently required his attention. The change in his position gave him no consolation; he would not allow his passport to be made out with his title; he shuddered at being called Lord Cadurcis; and the only reason that made him hesitate about attending them to Cherbury was its contiguity to his ancestral seat, which he resolved never to visit. There never in the world was a less selfish and more single-hearted man than George Cadurcis. Though the death of his cousin had invested him with one of the most ancient coronets in England, a noble residence and a fair estate, he would willingly have sacrificed his life to have recalled Plantagenet to existence, and to have secured the happiness of Venetia Herbert.

CHAPTER LXXXII.

Mournful Memories.



THE reader must not suppose, from the irresistible emotion that overcame Venetia at the very moment of her return, that she was entirely prostrated by her calamities. On the contrary, her mind had been employed, during the whole of her journey to England, in a silent effort to endure her lot with resignation. She had resolved to bear up against her misery with fortitude, and she inherited from her mother sufficient firmness of mind to enable her to achieve her purpose. She came back to Cherbury to live with patience and submission; and though her dreams of happiness might be vanished for ever, to contribute as much as was in her power to the content of that dear and remaining relative who was yet spared to her, and who depended in this world only upon the affection of her child. The return to Cherbury was a pang, and it was over. Venetia struggled to avoid the habits of an invalid; she purposed resuming, as far as was in her power, all the pursuits and duties of her life; and if it were neither possible, nor even desirable, to forget the past, she dwelt upon it neither

to sigh nor to murmur, but to cherish in a sweet and musing mood the ties and affections round which all her feelings had once gathered with so much enjoyment and so much hope.

She rose, therefore, on the morning after her return to Cherbury, at least serene; and she took an early opportunity, when George and her mother were engaged, and absent from the terrace-room, to go forth alone and wander amid her old haunts. There was not a spot about the park and gardens, which had been favourite resorts of herself and Plantagenet in their childhood, that she did not visit. They were unchanged; as green, and bright, and still as in old days, but what was she? The freshness, and brilliancy, and careless happiness of her life were fled for ever. And here he lived, and here he roamed, and here his voice sounded, now in glee, now in melancholy, now in wild and fanciful amusement, and now pouring into her bosom all his domestic sorrows.

It was but ten years since he first arrived at Cherbury. and who could have anticipated that that little, silent, reserved boy should, ere ten years had passed, have filled a wide and lofty space in the world's thought; that his existence should have influenced the mind of nations, and his death eclipsed their gaiety! His death! Terrible and disheartening thought! Plantagenet was no more. But he had not died without a record. His memory was embalmed in immortal verse, and he had breathed his passion to his Venetia in language that lingered in the ear, and would dwell for ever on the lips, of his fellow-men.

Among these woods, too, had Venetia first mused over her father; before her rose those mysterious chambers, whose secret she had penetrated at the

risk of her life. There were no secrets now. Was she happier? Now she felt that even in her early mystery there was delight, and that hope was veiled beneath its ominous shadow. There was now no future to ponder over; her hope was gone, and memory alone remained. All the dreams of those musing hours of her hidden reveries had been realised. She had seen that father, that surpassing parent, who had satisfied alike her heart and her imagination; she had been clasped to his bosom; she had lived to witness even her mother yield to his penitent embrace. And he too was gone; she could never meet him again in this world; in this world in which they had experienced such exquisite bliss; and now she was once more at Cherbury! Oh! give her back her girlhood, with all its painful mystery and harassing doubt! Give her again a future!

She returned to the hall; she met George on the terrace, she welcomed him with a sweet, yet mournful smile. 'I have been very selfish,' she said, 'for I have been walking alone. I mean to introduce you to Cherbury, but I could not resist visiting some old spots.' Her voice faltered in these last words. They re-entered the terrace-room together, and joined her mother.

'Nothing is changed, mamma,' said Venetia, in a more cheerful tone. 'It is pleasant to find something that is the same.'

Several days passed, and Lord Cadurcis evinced no desire to visit his inheritance. Yet Lady Annabel was anxious that he should do so, and had more than once impressed upon him the propriety. Even Venetia at length said to him, 'It is very selfish in us keeping you here, George. Your presence is a

great consolation, and yet, yet, ought you not to visit your home?' She avoided the name of Cadurcis.

'I ought, dear Venetia,' said George, 'and I will. I have promised Lady Annabel twenty times, but I feel a terrible disinclination. To-morrow, perhaps.'

'To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,' murmured Venetia to herself, 'I scarcely comprehend now what to-morrow means.' And then again addressing him, and with more liveliness, she said, 'We have only one friend in the world now, George, and I think that we ought to be very grateful that he is our neighbour.'

'It is a consolation to me,' said Lord Cadurcis, 'for I cannot remain here, and otherwise I should scarcely know how to depart.'

'I wish you would visit your home, if only for one morning,' said Venetia; 'if only to know how very near you are to us.'

'I dread going alone,' said Lord Cadurcis. 'I cannot ask Lady Annabel to accompany me, because ——' He hesitated.

'Because?' inquired Venetia.

'I cannot ask or wish her to leave you.'

'You are always thinking of me, dear George,' said Venetia, artlessly. 'I assure you, I have come back to Cherbury to be happy. I must visit your home some day, and I hope I shall visit it often. We will all go, soon,' she added.

'Then I will postpone my visit to that day,' said George. 'I am in no humour for business, which I know awaits me there. Let me enjoy a little more repose at dear Cherbury.'

'I have become very restless of late, I think,' said Venetia, 'but there is a particular spot in the garden that I wish to see. Come with me, George.'

Lord Cadurcis was only too happy to attend her. They proceeded through a winding walk in the shrubberies until they arrived at a small and open plot of turf, where Venetia stopped. 'There are some associations,' she said, 'of this spot connected with both those friends that we have lost. I have a fancy that it should be in some visible manner consecrated to their memories. On this spot, George, Plantagenet once spoke to me of my father. I should like to raise their busts here; and indeed it is a fit place for such a purpose; for poets,' she added, faintly smiling, 'should be surrounded with laurels.'

'I have some thoughts on this head that I am revolving in my fancy myself,' said Lord Cadurcis, 'but I will not speak of them now.'

'Yes, now, George; for indeed it is a satisfaction for me to speak of them, at least with you, with one who understood them so well, and loved them scarcely less than I did.'

George tenderly put his arm into hers and led her away. As they walked along, he explained to her his plans, which yet were somewhat crude, but which greatly interested her; but they were roused from their conversation by the bell of the hall sounding as if to summon them, and therefore they directed their way immediately to the terrace. A servant running met them; he brought a message from Lady Annabel. Their friend the Bishop of —— had arrived.

CHAPTER LXXXIII.

Wounded Hearts.

'WELL, my little daughter,' said the good Masham, advancing as Venetia entered the room, and tenderly embracing her. The kind-hearted old man maintained a conversation on indifferent subjects with animation for some minutes; and thus a meeting, the anticipation of which would have cost Venetia hours of pain and anxiety, occurred with less uneasy feelings.

Masham had hastened to Cherbury the moment he heard of the return of the Herberts to England. He did not come to console, but to enliven. He was well aware that even his eloquence, and all the influence of his piety, could not soften the irreparable past; and knowing, from experience, how in solitude the unhappy brood over sorrow, he fancied that his arrival, and perhaps his arrival only, might tend in some degree at this moment to their alleviation and comfort. He brought Lady Annabel and Venetia letters from their relations, with whom he had been staying at their country residence, and who were anxious that their unhappy kinsfolk should find change of scene under their roof.

'They are very affectionate,' said Lady Annabel, 'but I rather think that neither Venetia nor myself feel inclined to quit Cherbury at present.'

'Indeed not, mamma,' said Venetia. 'I hope we shall never leave home again.'

'You must come and see me some day,' said the Bishop; then turning to George, whom he was glad to find here, he addressed him in a hearty tone, and expressed his delight at again meeting him.

Insensibly to all parties this arrival of the good Masham exercised a beneficial influence on their spirits. They could sympathise with his cheerfulness, because they were convinced that he sympathised with their sorrow. His interesting conversation withdrew their minds from the painful subject on which they were always musing. It seemed profanation to either of the three mourners when they were together alone, to indulge in any topic but the absorbing one, and their utmost effort was to speak of the past with composure; but they all felt relieved, though at first unconsciously, when one, whose interest in their feelings could not be doubted, gave the signal of withdrawing their reflections from vicissitudes which it was useless to deplore. Even the social forms which the presence of a guest rendered indispensable, and the exercise of the courtesies of hospitality, contributed to this result. They withdrew their minds from the past. And as to the worthy Bishop, whose tact was as eminent as his good humour and benevolence, evincing as much delicacy of feeling as cheerfulness of temper, a very few days had elapsed before each of his companions was aware that his presence had contributed to their increased content.

'You have not been to the Abbey yet, Lord Ca-

durcis,' said Masham to him one day, as they were sitting together after dinner, the ladies having retired. 'You should go.'

'I have been unwilling to leave them,' said George, 'and I could scarcely expect them to accompany me. It is a visit that must revive painful recollections.'

'We must not dwell on the past,' said Masham; 'we must think only of the future.'

'Venetia has no future, I fear,' said Lord Cadurcis.

'Why not?' said Masham; 'she is yet a girl, and with a prospect of a long life. She must have a future, and I hope, and I believe, it will yet be a happy one.'

'Alas!' said Lord Cadurcis, 'no one can form an idea of the attachment that subsisted between Plantagenet and Venetia. They were not common feelings, or the feelings of common minds, my dear lord.'

'No one knew them both better than I did,' said Masham, 'not even yourself: they were my children.'

'I feel that,' said George, 'and therefore it is a pleasure to us all to see you, and to speak with you.'

'But we must look for consolation,' said Masham; 'to deplore is fruitless. If we live, we must struggle to live happily. To tell you the truth, though their immediate return to Cherbury was inevitable, and their residence here for a time is scarcely to be deprecated, I still hope they will not bury themselves here. For my part, after the necessary interval, I wish to see Venetia once more in the world.'

Lord Cadurcis looked very mournful, and shook his head.

'As for her dear mother, she is habituated to sorrow and disappointment,' said Masham. 'As long as Venetia lives Lady Annabel will be content. Besides,

deplorable as may be the past, there must be solace to her in the reflection that she was reconciled to her husband before his death, and contributed to his happiness. Venetia is the stricken lamb, but Venetia is formed for happiness, and it is in the nature of things that she will be happy. We must not, however, yield unnecessarily to our feelings. A violent exertion would be unwise, but we should habituate ourselves gradually to the exercise of our duties, and to our accustomed pursuits. It would be well for you to go to Cadurcis. If I were you I would go to-morrow. Take advantage of my presence, and return and give a report of your visit. Habituate Venetia to talk of a spot with which ultimately she must renew her intimacy.'

Influenced by this advice, Lord Cadurcis rose early on the next morning and repaired to the seat of his fathers, where hitherto his foot had never trod. When the circle at Cherbury assembled at their breakfast table he was missing, and Masham had undertaken the office of apprising his friends of the cause of his absence. He returned to dinner, and the conversation fell naturally upon the Abbey, and the impressions he had received. It was maintained at first by Lady Annabel and the Bishop, but Venetia ultimately joined in it, and with cheerfulness. Many a trait and incident of former days was alluded to; they talked of Mrs. Cadurcis, whom George had never seen; they settled the chambers he should inhabit; they mentioned the improvements which Plantagenet had once contemplated, and which George must now accomplish.

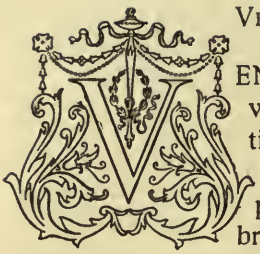
'You must go to London first,' said the Bishop; 'you have a great deal to do, and you should not

delay such business. I think you had better return with me. At this time of the year you need not be long absent; you will not be detained; and when you return, you will find yourself much more at ease; for, after all, nothing is more harassing than the feeling, that there is business which must be attended to, and which, nevertheless, is neglected.'

Both Lady Annabel and Venetia enforced this advice of their friend; and so it happened that, ere a week had elapsed, Lord Cadurcis, accompanying Masham, found himself once more in London.

CHAPTER LXXXIV.

Venetia's Advice.



ENETIA was now once more alone with her mother; it was as in old times. Their life was the same as before the visit of Plantagenet previous to his going to Cambridge, except indeed that they had no longer a friend at Marringhurst. They missed the Sabbath visits of that good man; for, though his successor performed the duties of the day, which had been a condition when he was presented to the living, the friend who knew all the secrets of their hearts was absent. Venetia continued to bear herself with great equanimity, and the anxiety which she observed instantly impressed on her mother's countenance, the moment she fancied there was unusual gloom on the brow of her child, impelled Venetia doubly to exert herself to appear resigned.

When Lady Annabel revolved in her mind the mournful past, and meditated over her early and unceasing efforts to secure the happiness of her daughter, and then contrasted her aspirations with the result, she could not acquit herself of having been too often unconsciously instrumental in forwarding a very different conclusion than that for which she had laboured.

This conviction preyed upon the mother, and the slightest evidence of reaction in Venetia's tranquilised demeanour occasioned her the utmost remorse and grief. The absence of George made both Lady Annabel and Venetia still more finely appreciate the solace of his society. Left to themselves, they felt how much they had depended on his vigilant and considerate attention, and how much his sweet temper and his unfailing sympathy had contributed to their consolation.

He wrote, however, to Venetia by every post, and his letters, if possible, endeared him still more to their hearts. Unwilling to dwell upon their mutual sorrows, yet always expressing sufficient to prove that distance and absence had not impaired his sympathy, he contrived, with infinite delicacy, even to amuse their solitude with the adventures of his life of bustle. The arrival of the post was the incident of the day; and not merely letters arrived; one day brought books, another music; continually some fresh token of his thought and affection reached them. He was, however, only a fortnight absent; but when he returned, it was to Cadurcis. He called upon them the next day, and indeed every morning found him at Cherbury; but he returned to his home at night; and so, without an effort, from their guest he had become their neighbour.

Plantagenet had left the whole of his property to his cousin: his mother's fortune, which, as an accessory fund, was not inconsiderable, besides the estate. And George intended to devote a portion of this to the restoration of the Abbey. Venetia was to be his counsellor in this operation, and therefore there were ample sources of amusement for the remainder of the

year. On a high ridge, which was one of the beacons of the county, and which, moreover, marked the junction of the domains of Cherbury and Cadurcis, it was his intention to raise a monument to the united memories of Marmion Herbert and Plantagenet, Lord Cadurcis. He brought down a design with him from London, and this was the project which he had previously whispered to Venetia. With George for her companion, too, Venetia was induced to resume her rides. It was her part to make him acquainted with the county in which he was so important a resident. Time therefore, at Cherbury, on the whole, flowed on in a tide of tranquil pleasure; and Lady Annabel observed, with interest and fondness, the continual presence beneath her roof of one who, from the first day she had met him, had engaged her kind feelings, and had since become intimately endeared to her.

The end of November was, however, now approaching, and Parliament was about to reassemble. Masham had written more than once to Lord Cadurcis, impressing upon him the propriety and expediency of taking his seat. He had shown these letters, as he showed everything, to Venetia, who was his counsellor on all subjects, and Venetia agreed with their friend.

'It is right.' said Venetia; 'You have a duty to perform, and you must perform it. Besides, I do not wish the name of Cadurcis to sink again into obscurity. I shall look forward with interest to Lord Cadurcis taking the oath and his seat. It will please me; it will indeed.'

'But Venetia,' said George, 'I do not like to leave this place. I am happy, if we may be happy. This

life suits me. I am a quiet man. I dislike London. I feel alone there.'

'You can write to us; you will have a great deal to say. And I shall have something to say to you now. I must give you a continual report how they go on at the abbey. I will be your steward, and superintend everything.'

'Ah!' said George, 'what shall I do in London without you, without your advice? There will be something occurring every day, and I shall have no one to consult. Indeed I shall feel quite miserable; I shall indeed.'

'It is quite impossible that, with your station, and at your time of life, you should bury yourself in the country,' said Venetia. 'You have the whole world before you, and you must enjoy it. It is very well for mamma and myself to lead this life. I look upon ourselves as two nuns. If Cadurcis is an abbey, Cherbury is now a convent.'

'How can a man wish to be more than happy? I am quite content here,' said George. 'What is London to me?'

'It may be a great deal to you, more than you think,' said Venetia. 'A great deal awaits you yet. However, there can be no doubt you should take your seat. You can always return, if you wish. But take your seat, and cultivate dear Masham. I have the utmost confidence in his wisdom and goodness. You cannot have a friend more respectable. Now mind my advice, George.'

'I always do, Venetia.'

CHAPTER LXXXV.

'The Loveliest of Women.'

TIME and Faith are the great consolers, and neither of these precious sources of solace were wanting to the inhabitants of Cherbury. They were again living alone, but their lives were cheerful; and if Venetia no longer indulged in a worldly and blissful future, nevertheless, in the society of her mother, in the resources of art and literature, in the diligent discharge of her duties to her humble neighbours, and in cherishing the memory of the departed, she experienced a life that was not without its tranquil pleasures.

She maintained with Lord Cadurcis a constant correspondence; he wrote to her every day, and although they were separated, there was not an incident of his life, and scarcely a thought, of which she was not cognisant. It was with great difficulty that George could induce himself to remain in London; but Masham, who soon obtained over him all the influence which Venetia desired, ever opposed his return to the Abbey. The good Bishop was not unaware of the feelings with which Lord Cadurcis looked back to the hall of Cherbury, and himself of a glad and sanguine

temperament, he indulged in a belief in the consummation of all that happiness for which his young friend, rather sceptically, sighed. But Masham was aware that time could alone soften the bitterness of Venetia's sorrow, and prepare her for that change of life which he felt confident would alone ensure the happiness both of herself and her mother. He therefore detained Lord Cadurcis in London the whole of the sessions that, on his return to Cherbury, his society might be esteemed a novel and agreeable incident in the existence of its inhabitants, and not be associated merely with their calamities.

It was therefore about a year after the catastrophe which had so suddenly changed the whole tenor of their lives, and occasioned so unexpected a revolution in his own position. that Lord Cadurcis arrived at his ancestral seat, with no intention of again speedily leaving it. He had long and frequently apprised his friends of his approaching presence, and, arriving at the abbey late at night, he was at Cherbury early on the following morning.

Although no inconsiderable interval had elapsed since Lord Cadurcis had parted from the Herberts, the continual correspondence that had been maintained between himself and Venetia divested his visit of the slightest embarrassment. They met as if they had parted yesterday, except perhaps with greater fondness. The chain of their feelings was unbroken. He was indeed welcomed, both by Lady Annabel and her daughter, with warm affection; and his absence had only rendered him dearer to them by affording an opportunity of feeling how much his society contributed to their felicity. Venetia was anxious to know his opinion of the improvements at the Abbey,

which she had superintended; but he assured her that he would examine nothing without her company, and ultimately they agreed to walk over to Cadurcis.

It was a summer day, and they walked through that very wood wherein we described the journey of the child Venetia, at the commencement of this very history. The blue patches of wild hyacinths had all disappeared, but there were flowers as sweet. What if the first feelings of our heart fade, like the first flowers of spring, succeeding years, like the coming summer, may bring emotions not less charming, and, perchance, far more fervent!

'I can scarcely believe,' said Lord Cadurcis, 'that I am once more with you. I know not what surprises me most, Venetia, that we should be walking once more together in the woods of Cherbury, or that I ever should have dared to quit them.'

'And yet it was better, dear George,' said Venetia. 'You must now rejoice that you have fulfilled your duty, and yet you are here again. Besides, the Abbey never would have been finished if you had remained. To complete all our plans, it required a mistress.'

'I wish it always had one,' said George. 'Ah, Venetia! once you told me never to despair.'

'And what have you to despair about, George?'

'Heigh-ho!' said Lord Cadurcis, 'I never shall be able to live in this Abbey alone.'

'You should have brought a wife from London,' said Venetia.

'I told you once, Venetia, that I was not a marrying man,' said Lord Cadurcis; 'and certainly I never shall bring a wife from London.'

'Then you cannot accustom yourself too soon to a bachelor's life,' said Venetia.

'Ah, Venetia!' said George, 'I wish I were clever; I wish I were a genius; I wish I were a great man.'

'Why, George?'

'Because, Venetia, perhaps,' and Lord Cadurcis hesitated, 'perhaps you would think differently of me? I mean perhaps your feelings towards me might; ah, Venetia! perhaps you might think me worthy of you; perhaps you might love me.'

'I am sure, dear George, if I did not love you, I should be the most ungrateful of beings: you are our only friend.'

'And can I never be more than a friend to you, Venetia?' said Lord Cadurcis, blushing very deeply.

'I am sure, dear George, I should be very sorry for your sake, if you wished to be more,' said Venetia.

'Why?' said Lord Cadurcis.

'Because I should not like to see you unite your destiny with that of a very unfortunate, if not a very unhappy, person.'

'The sweetest, the loveliest of women!' said Lord Cadurcis. 'O Venetia! I dare not express what I feel, still less what I could hope. I think so little of myself, so highly of you, that I am convinced my aspirations are too arrogant for me to breathe them.'

'Ah! dear George, you deserve to be happy,' said Venetia. 'Would that it were in my power to make you!'

'Dearest Venetia! it is, it is,' exclaimed Lord Cadurcis; then checking himself, as if frightened by his boldness, he added in a more subdued tone, 'I feel I am not worthy of you.'

They stood upon the breezy down that divided the demesnes of Cherbury and the Abbey. Beneath

them rose, 'embosomed in a valley of green bowers,' the ancient pile lately renovated under the studious care of Venetia.

'Ah!' said Lord Cadurcis, 'be not less kind to the master of these towers, than to the roof that you have fostered. You have renovated our halls, restore our happiness! There is an union that will bring consolation to more than one hearth, and baffle all the crosses of adverse fate. Venetia, beautiful and noble-minded Venetia, condescend to fulfil it!'

Perhaps the reader will not be surprised that, within a few months of this morning walk, the hands of George, Lord Cadurcis, and Venetia Herbert were joined in the chapel at Cherbury by the good Masham. Peace be with them.

THE LETTERS OF RUNNYMEDE

DEDICATION

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

SIR ROBERT PEEL, BART., M.P.

JULY 27, 1836

DEDICATION

TO THE

RIGHT HON. SIR ROBERT PEEL, BART., M.P.

SIR,—I have the honour to dedicate to you a volume illustrative of WHIGS and WHIGGISM. It has been my object to delineate within its pages not only the present characters and recent exploits of the most active of the partisans, but also the essential and permanent spirit of the party. It appeared to me that it might be advantageous to connect the criticism on the character of the hour with some researches into the factious idiosyncrasy of centuries. Political parties are not so inconsistent as the superficial imagine; and, in my opinion, the Whig of a century back does not differ so materially as some would represent from the Whig of the present day. I hope, therefore, that this volume may conduce, not only to the amusement, but to the instruction of my countrymen.

It is now, Sir, some six months past since I seized the occasion of addressing you another letter, written under very different auspices. The session of Parliament was then about to commence; it is now about to close. These six months have not been uneventful in results. If they have not witnessed any legis-

lative enactment eminently tending to our social welfare, they have developed much political conduct for which our posterity may be grateful: for this session, Sir, has at least been memorable for one great event—an event not inferior, in my estimation, in its beneficial influence on the fortunes of the country, to Magna Charta itself—I mean the rally of the English Constitution; I might use a stronger phrase, I might say its triumph.*

And it has triumphed because it has become understood. The more its principles have been examined, the more the intention of its various parts has been investigated, and its general scope comprehended, the more beneficent and profound has appeared the polity of our fathers. The public mind of late has been cleared of a vast amount of error in

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*Referring to the reviving spirit of the Lords, who in the course of the session had rejected in succession the Bill to Reform the Irish Municipal Corporations, the Irish Tithe Bill, the Bill for governing Charitable Trusts by popular election, and the Bill for the Disfranchisement of Stafford. The reason for this succession of disasters is to be found partly in the careless incompetency of Lord Melbourne, but principally in the fact that Lord Lyndhurst led the opposition in the Upper House. In his Autobiography Lord Campbell says: 'In the House of Lords we were at the mercy of our opponents. . . . Lyndhurst avowed their object to be to turn against Lord Melbourne a sentiment of William III. which Lord Melbourne himself had once quoted with approbation, that "while there were debates about the best form of government, some preferring monarchy, some aristocracy, some democracy, he would not pretend to decide between them, but he was sure that the worst government was that which could not carry its own measures." . . . Our party was deplorably ill-off for some peer to take charge of such Bills. Lord Melbourne would give himself no trouble about them. They were left to Duncannon (Lord Privy Seal), who, though a man of excellent good sense, was wholly incompetent to enter the lists with Lyndhurst.'

constitutional learning. Scarcely a hired writer would have the front at this day to pretend that a difference of opinion between the two Houses of Parliament is a collision between the Peers and the People. That phrase 'the People' is a little better comprehended now than it used to be; it will not serve for the stalking horse of faction as it did. We know very well that the House of Commons is not the House of 'the People;' we know very well that 'the People' is a body not intelligible in a political sense; we know very well that the Lords and the Commons are both sections of the Nation, and both alike and equally representative of that great community. And we know very well that if the contrary propositions to all these were maintained, the Government of this English Empire might, at this moment, be the pastime and plunder of some score of Irish adventurers.

When, Sir, you quitted Drayton in February,* the vagabond delegate of a foreign priesthood† was stirring up rebellion against the Peers of England, with the implied, if not the definite, sanction of His Majesty's Ministers. Where is that hired disturber now? Like base coin detected by the very consequences of its currency, and finally nailed against the counter it had deceived, so this bad politician, like a bad shilling, has worn off his edge by his very restlessness. Parliament met, and the King's Ministers exhibited with a flourish their emblazoned catalogue of oligarchical *coups-d'état,* by which they were to entrench themselves in power under the plea of amelio-

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*William IV. opened Parliament in person for the last time February 4, 1836.

†Daniel O'Connell.

rating our society.* Not one of these measures has been carried. Yet we were told that their success was certain, and by a simple process—by the close and incontestable union between all true reformers. The union between all true reformers has terminated in the mutiny of Downing Street.†

I believe that I have commemorated in this volume that celebrated harangue which the Chancellor of the Exchequer, at the commencement of the session, addressed at a dinner to his constituents.‡ You may perhaps remember, Sir, the glowing promises of that Right Honourable Gentleman: they seemed almost to announce the advent of a political millennium. 'First and foremost,' announced the Right Honourable Chancellor, 'we shall proceed in our great work of the reform of the Court of Equity;' the *opus magnum* of the gifted Cottenham. It seems the course of nature was reversed here, and the butterfly turned into grub. 'Our earnest attention will then be directed,' quoth Mr. Rice,§ 'to the entire and complete relief of our Dissenting brethren and fellow-subjects.' How liberal, how condescending, and how sincere! The Dissenters are absolutely our fellow-subjects.

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*The Bills promised in the King's Speech included measures for the Reform of Ecclesiastical Establishments, for Tithe Commutation, for the Redress of the Grievances of Dissenters, for the Reform of the Court of Chancery, for the Settlement of the Irish Tithe Dispute, for the Reform of Irish Municipal Corporations, and for the Assimilation of the Irish Poor Law to that of England.

†When Lord John Russell quarrelled with his colleagues on the Irish Church question. *See* the *Greville Memoirs*, vol. iii. pp. 295 *et seq.*

‡Letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, *post*, p. 83.

§Mr. Spring Rice, afterwards Lord Monteagle.

None but a Whig, a statesman almost eructating with the plenary inspiration of the spirit of the age, could have been capable of making so philosophical an admission. In the meantime six months have passed, and nothing has been done for our unhappy 'fellow-subjects,' while the Dissenting organs denounce even the projected alleviations as a miserable insult. To justice to Ireland Mr. Rice of course was pledged, and most determined to obtain it; but his Bills have been dishonoured nevertheless. And the settlement of the Irish Tithe, and the Reform of the Irish Corporations, are about as much advanced by this great Whig Government as the relief of the Dissenters and the reform of the Court of Chancery. What have they done then? What pledge have they redeemed? The Ecclesiastical Courts remain unpurged. Even the Stamp Act, through the medium of which the Whigs, as usual, have levelled a blow at the liberty of the press, has not passed yet, and in its present inquisitorial form can never become a law. What then, I repeat, have they done? They promised indeed to break open the prisons like Jack Cade; but as yet the gates are barred; the pensions are still paid, and the soldiers still flogged. Oh! ye Scribes of the Treasury and Pharisees of Downing Street!

Supported in the House of Lords by a body inferior in number to the Peers created by the Whigs during the last five years, upheld in the House of Commons by a majority of twenty-six, Lord Melbourne still clings to his mulish and ungenerative position of place without power; and with a degree of modest frankness and constitutional propriety equally admirable, pledges himself before his country, that, as long as he is supported by a majority of the House

of Commons, he will remain Minister. I apprehend the ratification of a Ministry is as necessary by one House of Parliament as by the other; but I stop not to discuss this. The choice of Ministers was once entrusted to a different authority than that of either Lords or Commons. But this is an old almanack; and I leave Lord Viscount Melbourne to shake its dust off at his next interview with his projected Doge of Windsor.

RUNNYMEDE.

JULY 27, 1836.

PREFACE

THE 'Runnymede Letters,' of which the following pages are a reprint, were evoked by the events of 1835 and 1836. The authorship has never been acknowledged, but it is a matter concerning which there can be no doubt. 'Runnymede,' and the author of 'The Crisis Examined,' must have been one and the same person. Lord Beaconsfield himself never disavowed the Letters, though he never claimed them, and it was universally understood, when he explained that he was 'a gentleman of the press and bore no other escutcheon,' and said in a letter to Lady Blessington, that he 'had never made a shilling by all his journalising,' that he referred to his association with the *Times* in the matter of these Letters.

The course of events during 1834–5–6 was very singular. In January, 1834, Earl Grey was still at the head of the Government, and Brougham was Lord Chancellor; Lord Althorp was Chancellor of the Exchequer; Lord Melbourne was at the Home Office, and Palmerston was Foreign Secretary. The Cabinet had been going to pieces for some time. Lord Durham was the first to desert the sinking ship, and one after another, Ministers went their way. The King was only too glad to be rid of them. He disliked the

Whigs generally, and he hated Brougham with a holy hatred. He 'never wanted to see his ugly face again.' Brougham, on his side, in spite of the ardent protestations of loyalty and affection for the King, which he vented in a sickening fashion on every possible occasion during his 'progress' through Scotland, as Campbell calls his tour, had an equal dislike for the person of his Majesty, and when the King laughed his Whig counsellors out of office, Brougham committed an unpardonable breach of etiquette by sending the Great Seal back to the King in a bag by the hands of General Sir Herbert Taylor. By so acting, Brougham effectually barred all chances which he might have had of returning to office. He tried every expedient, even to offering to undertake the duties of Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer under Lyndhurst, but after 1834 he was rigorously excluded from place and power.

Lord Grey's Ministry went out of office on the 9th of July. A week later a Whig Cabinet was reconstructed, with Lord Melbourne at its head. Lord Grey took no part in it. The Privy Seal was offered to him, but he was disgusted with the unfaithfulness and intriguing of his quondam colleagues, refused the offer, and withdrew to Howick. The death of Lord Spencer, on the 10th of November, gave the King the excuse he had been eagerly seeking, and Peel was 'sent for.' Unfortunately he was in Rome, and a King's messenger had to be despatched in pursuit, the Duke of Wellington undertaking to administer the Government until he could be brought back. In December, Peel was at the head of affairs, with Lyndhurst as Chancellor and the Duke of Wellington as Foreign Secretary. Then came the Lichfield House

compact, in the spring of 1835, when O'Connell patched up a truce with the 'base, bloody, and brutal Whigs,' and bound himself to support their measures and their policy generally in consideration of their friendly aid to his proposals. The first effect of the coalition was an attack on the Irish Church, in which the services of the Irish brigade were freely given to the Whigs. The Church was to be despoiled, and the efforts of the Government to save her revenues for religious uses were frustrated by the coalition of Whigs, Radicals, and Repealers. An amendment to the Address was carried on February 26, by which Ministers were left in a minority of seven. Three adverse divisions followed in quick succession on the Irish Church. First came a resolution proposed by Lord John Russell, 'that the House do resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House to consider the temporalities of the Church of Ireland,' which was carried by 309 to 302. On April 6, another division was taken on the same subject, and Ministers found themselves in a minority of 25. On the following day the minority was increased to 27, and on the 8th the Duke of Wellington in the Lords, and Sir Robert Peel in the Commons, announced the resignation of the Ministry.

Ten days later the second Melbourne administration was complete. It may be convenient to give a list of the Ministry in this place:—

First Lord of the Treasury	Viscount Melbourne.
President of the Council	Marquis of Landsdowne.
Privy Seal	Lord Duncannon.
Chancellor of the Exchequer	Mr. Spring Rice.
Home Secretary	Lord John Russell.
Foreign Secretary	Lord Palmerston.

Colonial Secretary . . .	Mr. Charles Grant; afterwards (May, 1835) Lord Glenelg.
Admiralty	Lord Auckland.
Board of Control . . .	Sir John Cam Hobhouse.
Secretary at War . . .	Lord Howick.
Board of Trade	Mr. Poulett Thomson; afterwards (1840) Lord Sydenham.
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster	Lord Holland.

The Great Seal was in Commission until January 19, 1836, when Pepys became Chancellor with the title of Lord Cottenham, the reasons for which unusual step were in the first place the King's dislike to Brougham, and in the second, Brougham's own impracticable temper and determination to domineer over his friends and colleagues, which made him, to use Lord Melbourne's phrase, 'impossible.'

It will be observed that the Letters breathe throughout a spirit of profound detestation of the principles of Whiggism, the explanation of which is to be found in the little tract 'The Spirit of Whiggism.' They are equally distinguished by the fervour of their author's attachment to Sir Robert Peel. There can be no doubt of the sincerity of the writer's feelings at that time. In 1836 Peel had not executed that famous *volte face* which, ten years later, turned his warmest friend and supporter into the bitterest and most unrelenting of his opponents.

In the present condition of public affairs, when the nation is witness to the spectacle of a Minister clinging to office by the help of the votes of disaffected Irishmen, won from them by treaties as disgraceful as the Lichfield House compact itself; when attacks are daily made on the House of Lords; when the Church is threatened in unmistakable terms by mem-

bers of the Government itself; and when concessions are constantly made to lawlessness, rebellion, and outrage, at the expense of the landed interest, it has been thought desirable to reproduce in a convenient form the comments of the great lost leader of the Tory party on the events of fifty years ago. There is so great a likeness between the two periods that those comments must surely be good for the present distress.

Some notes have been appended which it is hoped will be found useful in explaining what might be otherwise obscure, and in recalling to the minds of the students of politics, the personages who filled the political stage in 1836. There are some few repetitions in the notes, but it has been thought wiser to risk a reproach on that score than to give the reader the trouble of turning back in search of an explanation which may be given in half a line.

THE
LETTERS OF RUNNYMEDE

LETTER I.

TO

VISCOUNT MELBOURNE

JANUARY 18, 1836

LETTER I.

[It was a curious irony of fate that made William Lamb, Viscount Melbourne, into a Prime Minister. When in 1834 the success of the intrigue against Earl Grey and his colleagues of the Reform Ministry brought him to the front, Greville wrote:—'Nobody thinks the Government will last long, and everybody "wonders" how Melbourne will do it. He is certainly a queer fellow to be Prime Minister, and he and Brougham are two wild chaps to have the destinies of this country in their hands. I should not be surprised if Melbourne was to rouse his dormant energies, and be excited by the greatness of his position to display the vigour and decision in which he is not deficient. Unfortunately, his reputation is not particularly good; he is considered lax in morals, indifferent in religion, and very loose and pliant in politics. He is supposed to have consented to measures of which he disapproved, because it suited his ease and convenience to do so, and because he was actuated by no strong political principles or opinions.' It would be difficult to put the case against Lord Melbourne more accurately. His immoralities were notorious, and his relations with his wife had been for years the talk of the town. In a few months he was to figure as the defendant in an action for *crim. con.*, in which, though Campbell succeeded in winning a verdict for him, posterity has very generally agreed that he came out with a sadly smirched reputation. His religious views were peculiar, to say the least. Habitually a curiously profane talker, he delighted in the study of patristic theology—which landed him in a conviction of unbelief—which he alternated with studies of a very different kind, as hinted more than once by 'Runnymede,' and he was a victim to idleness and lounging to an almost incredible extent. Part of his weaknesses may, of course, have been affectation. The story, for example, of his dandling a sofa cushion whilst receiving a deputation on the subject of the Corn Duties, and

that of his blowing a feather about the room whilst some grave city men were arguing about the Currency, may be exaggerations, but the fact that they were related and commonly believed, affords very clear evidence of the opinion popularly entertained of him. His political views seem to have been summed up in the saying that the Whigs were the best of all possible political parties; that the policy of leaving things alone was the wisest and most statesmanlike; and that to keep in office was the first duty of a Whig Minister.]

To Viscount Melbourne.

MY LORD,—The Marquis of Halifax* was wont to say of his Royal Master, that, 'after all, his favourite Sultana Queen was sauntering.' It is, perhaps, hopeless that your Lordship should rouse yourself from the embraces of that Siren Desidia to whose fatal influence you are not less a slave than our second Charles, and that you should cease to saunter over the destinies of a nation, and lounge away the glory of an empire. Yet the swift shadows of coming events are assuredly sufficiently dark and ominous to startle from its indolence even

The sleekest swine in Epicurus' sty.†

When I recall to my bewildered memory the perplexing circumstance that William Lamb is Prime Minister of England, it seems to me that I recollect with labour the crowning incident of some grotesque dream, or that in some pastime of the season you

*Saville, Marquis of Halifax; not to be confounded with Montagu, Earl of Halifax.

†'The fattest hog in Epicurus' sty.'—Mason, *Heroic Epistle.*

have drawn for the amusement of a nation a temporary character, ludicrously appropriate only from the total want of connection and fitness between the festive part and the individual by whom it is sustained. Previous to the passing of the famous Act of 1832, for the amendment of popular representation, your reputation, I believe, principally depended upon your talent for prologue writing. No one was held to introduce with more grace and spirit the performances of an amateur society. With the exception of an annual oration against parliamentary reform, your career in the House of Commons was never remarkably distinguished. Your Cabinet, indeed, appears to have been constructed from the materials of your old dramatic company. The domestic policy of the country is entrusted to the celebrated author of *Don Carlos;** the Fletcher of this Beaumont, the author of the *Siege of Constantinople*† (an idea apparently borrowed from your Russian allies) is the guardian of the lives and properties of the Irish clergy, under the charitable supervision of that 'first tragedy man,' the Lord of Mulgrave; ‡ Lord Glenelg § admirably personifies a sleepy audience; while your Chancellor of the

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*Lord John Russell. Home Secretary.

†Viscount Morpeth (Hon. G. W. F. Howard, afterwards seventh Earl of Carlisle), author of *The Last of the Greeks, or the Fall of Constantinople*, a tragedy in five acts and in verse, Chief Secretary for Ireland.

‡Earl of Mulgrave, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

§Lord Glenelg (Right Hon. Charles Grant, first and last Baron Glenelg, of Glenelg, in Inverness-shire) was the last of the Canningites. He turned Whig at the period of the Reform Bill, and was from 1834 to 1839 Secretary of the Colonies. Lord Glenelg passed out of sight in consequence of his approval of the notorious 'Ordinance' of Lord Durham, in which the Canadian rebels of 1838 who had submitted to the Queen's pleasure, were to be sent to Bermuda under constraint, and

Exchequer* beats Mr. Power;† and your Secretary for Foreign Affairs,‡ in his mimetic sympathy with French manners and intimate acquaintance with French character, is scarcely inferior to the late ingenious Charles Mathews. That general adapter from the Spanish, Lord Holland, gives you all the advantage, in the affairs of the Peninsula, of his early studies of Lope de Vega, and, indeed, with his skilful assistance you appear, by all accounts, to have woven a plot absurd and complicated enough even for the grave humour of Madrid or the gay fancy of Seville. For yourself is still reserved a monopoly of your peculiar talent, and doubtless on February 4 you will open your House with an introductory composition worthy of your previous reputation.

I remember some years ago listening to one of these elegant productions from the practised pen of the present Prime Minister of Great Britain, if not of Ireland. I think it was on that occasion that you annunciated to your audience the great moral discovery that the characteristic of the public mind of the present day was

A taste for evil.

Our taste for evil does not seem to be on the wane, since it has permitted this great empire to be gov-

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punished with death if they returned. The Ordinance was disallowed: Lord Durham resigned and Lord Glenelg retired. He was made a Commissioner of the Land Tax and 'accepted a pension of 2,000*l.* per annum.' He died on April 23, 1866, aged eighty-seven, having enjoyed his pension twenty-seven years.

*Mr. Spring Rice, afterwards Lord Monteagle.

†Tyrone Power, the actor, then (1836) in the height of his popularity. He was drowned in the steamship *President*, which left New York in April, 1841, and was never heard of afterwards.

‡Lord Palmerston.

erned by the Whigs, and has induced even those Whigs to be governed by an Irish rebel.* Your prologue, my Lord, was quite prophetic.

If your Royal Master's speech at the opening of his Parliament may share its inspirations, it will tell to the people of England some terrible truths.

It will announce, in the first place, that the policy of your theatrical Cabinet has at length succeeded in dividing the people of England into two hostile camps, in which numbers are arrayed against property, ignorance against knowledge, and sects against institutions.

It will announce to us that your theatrical Cabinet has also been not less fortunate in maturing the passive resistance of the enemy in Ireland into active hostility, and that you have obtained the civil war from which the Duke of Wellington shrank, without acquiring the political security which might have been its consequence.

It will announce to us that in foreign affairs you and your company have finally succeeded in destroying all our old alliances without substituting any new ones; and that, after having sacrificed every principle of British policy to secure an intimate alliance with France,† the Cabinet of the Tuileries has even had the airy audacity to refuse its co-operation in that very treaty in which its promises alone involved you; and that, while the British Minister can with extreme difficulty obtain an audience at St. Petersburg, the Ambassador of France passes with a polite smile of gay recognition the luckless representative of William IV.,

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*O'Connell—an allusion to the Lichfield House compact of 1835.
†Always a 'note' of Whig policy from 1789 to 1884.

who is lounging in an ante-chamber in the enjoyment of an indolence which even your Lordship might envy.

It will announce to us, that in our colonial empire the most important results may speedily be anticipated from the discreet selection of Lord Auckland as a successor to our Clives and our Hastings;* that the progressive improvement of the French in the manufacture of beet-root may compensate for the approaching destruction of our West Indian plantations; and that, although Canada is not yet independent, the final triumph of liberal principles, under the immediate patronage of the Government, may eventually console us for the loss of the glory of Chatham and the conquests of Wolfe.

At home or abroad, indeed, an agreeable prospect on every side surrounds you. Your Lordship may exclaim with Hannibal, 'Behind us are the Alps, before us is Eridanus!' And who are your assistants to stem the profound and impetuous current of this awful futurity? At an unconstitutional expenditure of four coronets, which may some day figure as an article in an impeachment, the Whigs have at length obtained a Lord Chancellor,† as a lawyer not illustrious, as a statesman a nonentity. The seals of the

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*George Eden, second Earl of Auckland, born 1784, succeeded to the title May, 1811; President of the Board of Trade and Master of the Mint, with a seat in the Cabinet of Earl Grey, 1830. First Lord of the Admiralty in 1834 and made Governor-General of India in 1835. His administration of India was chiefly memorable for the disastrous Afghan war of 1838. Lord Auckland's services were rewarded with an Earldom in 1839.

†Christopher Charles Pepys, Earl of Cottenham, who was made Lord Chancellor in order to get rid of the inconvenience of keeping the Great Seal in Commission. According to Campbell, 'Lord Melbourne announced that Brougham could not be reappointed, saying with

principal office of the State are entrusted to an individual, who, on the principle that good vinegar is the corruption of bad wine, has been metamorphosed from an incapable author into an eminent politician.* His brother Secretaries remind me of two battered female sinners; one frivolous, the other exhausted; one taking refuge from conscious scorn in rouge and the affected giggle of fluttering folly, and the other in strong waters and devotion.† Then Mr. Spring Rice waves a switch, which he would fain persuade you is a shillelagh; while the Rienzi of Westminster smiles with marvelling complacency at the strange chapter of accidents which has converted a man whose friends pelted George Lamb with a cabbage-stalk into a main prop of William Lamb's Cabinet.

Some yet remain; the acute intelligence of Lansdowne, the polished mind of Thomson,‡ Howick's§

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deep emphasis, "It is impossible to act with him;" and stated the plan proposed to be that Pepys should be Chancellor and that Bickersteth (afterwards Lord Langdale) should succeed him as Master of the Rolls, with a peerage. It was well foreseen that Brougham's exclusion from office would drive him into furious opposition, and Pepys being known to be very feeble in debate, the object was to select an assistant champion for the defence of the Government. A most unfortunate choice was made, and it was very speedily repented of.' It is hardly a secret that on this occasion Brougham's reason gave way. Campbell refers to the fact twice (*Lives of the Chancellors*, vol. viii. pp. 110 and 476–7), and his hint has been more than confirmed by contemporary evidence. The other coronets referred to in the text were those of Lord Oranmore and of Lady Stratheden, the latter of which was bestowed to console her husband, Sir John (afterwards Lord) Campbell for his exclusion from the Chancellorship.

*Lord John Russell, author of *Don Carlos*, a Tragedy.

†Lords Palmerston and Glenelg. The allusion is of course to Foote's farce, *The Minor*.

‡Poulett Thomson, the President of the Board of Trade.

§Viscount Howick (the present Earl Grey), Secretary at War; 'the bitterest of all that party,' says Greville.

calm maturity, and the youthful energy of Holland.*

And this is the Cabinet that controls the destinies of a far vaster population than owned the sway of Rome in the palmiest hour of its imperial fame! Scarron or Butler should celebrate its political freaks, and the shifting expedients of its ignoble statecraft. But while I watch you in your ludicrous councils, an awful shade rises from behind the chair of my Lord President. Slaves! it is your master; it is Eblis with Captain Rock's bloody cap shadowing his atrocious countenance. In one hand he waves a torch, and in the other clutches a skull. He gazes on his victims with a leer of fiendish triumph. Contemptible as you are, it is this dark connection† that involves your fate with even an epic dignity, and makes the impending story of your retributive fortunes assume almost a Dantesque sublimity.

January 18, 1836.

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*Fox, Lord Holland, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster—a martyr to gout and almost in his dotage in 1836.

†The Lichfield House compact.

LETTER II.

TO

SIR JOHN CAMPBELL

JANUARY 19, 1836

LETTER II.

['Plain John Campbell' is perhaps the pleasantest figure in the crowd of mediocrities who came to the front after the passage of the Reform Bill of 1832. He was a Scotchman of the best type—shrewd, conscientious, and of unflagging industry. So much did this last quality impress his contemporaries that it is told of two of the most distinguished of them that meeting in Court on the day of his euthanasia—for surely no man ever had a happier ending to his life—one said to the other, 'So poor Campbell's gone! Well, we shall meet him at the Day of Judgment.' 'Yes,' replied the other, 'and you may take your affidavit that he will be offering to assist the business of the Court by taking the short causes.' In the cataclysm of 1835 he gave great offence by accepting the post of Attorney-General, which he probably did because, with the proverbial shrewdness of his nation, he foresaw the speedy downfall of Lord Melbourne's second administration, and did not care to relinquish a very lucrative practice at the bar for the barren honour of a chancellorship which might be brought to an end at any moment and leave him stranded in the Upper House—with a pension, it is true, but without any chance of that work which we may fairly believe was dearer to him than its pecuniary rewards. He had held the post of Attorney-General in the first Melbourne administration, with a somewhat inexplicable understanding that he was not to expect to succeed as a matter of right to any vacancy in the Courts ('Greville,' vol. iii. p. 141). When Melbourne returned to power after the short-lived administration of the Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel, Campbell's aid as Attorney-General was found to be indispensable, and he was consoled for any seeming slight by the elevation of Lady Campbell to the rank of a peeress in her own right with the title of Stratheden, on which account the present Lord Campbell bears a double title. The matter was

an arrangement to suit the convenience of the Ministry, and Campbell's acquiescence in it was very generally condemned. 'Pollock and one or two others,' he says in his Autobiography, 'blamed me for not resigning, and said I had lowered the office of Attorney-General, but Abercromby, Follett, and those whose opinions I most regarded, approved, and I have never since repented of any part of my conduct on this occasion.']

To Sir John Campbell.

SIR,—I have always been of opinion —an opinion I imbibed early in life from great authorities—that the Attorney- and Solicitor-General were not more the guardians of the honour and the interests of the Crown than of the honour and the interests of the Bar. It appears to me that you have failed in your duty as representative of this once illustrious body, and therefore it is that I address to you this letter.

Although your political opponent, I trust I am not incapable of acknowledging and appreciating your abilities and acquirements. They are sound, but they are not splendid. You have mastered considerable legal reading, you are gifted with no ordinary shrewdness, you have enjoyed great practice, and you have gained great experience; you possess undaunted perseverance and invincible industry. But you can advance no claim to the refined subtlety of an Eldon, and still less to the luminous precision, the quick perception, the varied knowledge, and accomplished eloquence of a Lyndhurst. In profound learning you cannot cope for a moment with Sir Edward Sugden;*

* Afterwards Lord St. Leonards.

as an advocate you can endure no competition with your eminent father-in-law,* or with Sir William Follett, or — for I am not writing as a partisan — with Mr. Serjeant Wilde. As a pleader I believe you were distinguished, though there are many who, even in this humble province, have deemed that you might yield the palm to Mr. Baron Parke and Mr. Justice Littledale.

But, whatever be your merits or defects, you are still the King's Attorney-General, and as the King's Attorney-General you have a prescriptive, if not a positive, right to claim any seat upon the judgment bench† which becomes vacant during your official tenure. This prescriptive right has never been doubted in the profession. It has been understood and acted upon by members of the bar, of all parties, and at all times. In recent days, Sir Robert Gifford,‡ though a common law lawyer, succeeded to the equity tribunal of Sir Thomas Plomer. It is true that Sir Robert Gifford, for a very short time previous to his accession, had practised in the Court of Chancery, but the right of the Attorney-General to succeed, under any circumstances, was again recognised by Lord Eldon, when Sir John Copley,§ who had never been in an Equity Court in his life, became Master of the Rolls. On this occasion it is well known that Leach,‖ the Vice-Chancellor, was anxious to succeed

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*Sir James Scarlett, afterwards Lord Abinger, to whose daughter Campbell was married in September 1821.

†Greville says that he did urge his claims on Leach's death, but he allows it to be understood that they were overruled by Lord Melbourne.

‡Lord Gifford, Master of the Rolls 1824.

§Lord Lyndhurst.

‖When Lord Grey formed his Ministry in 1830, it was expected that Sir John Leach would have been his Lord Chancellor. Lord Grey

Lord Gifford, but his request was not for a moment listened to in preference to the claim of the Attorney-General.

In allowing a judge* who a very short time back was your inferior officer, to become Lord Chancellor of England, and in permitting a barrister who had not even filled the office of Solicitor-General to be elevated over your head into the seat of the Master of the Rolls, either you must have esteemed yourself absolutely incompetent to the discharge of those great offices, or you must have been painfully conscious of your marked inferiority to both the individuals who were promoted in your teeth; or last, and bitterest alternative, you must have claimed your right, and been denied its enjoyment.† In the first instance, you virtually declared that you were equally unfit for the office you at present hold, and what should have been your consequent conduct is obvious; in the second, you betrayed the interests of the bar; and in the third, you betrayed not only the interests of the bar, but its honour also.

Without imputing to Sir John Campbell any marvellous degree of arrogance, I cannot bring myself to believe that he holds himself absolutely unfit for the discharge of the offices in question. I will not even credit that he has yielded to his unfeigned sense of his marked inferiority to the supernatural wisdom and

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himself would have preferred Lord Lyndhurst, but Lord Althorp having declared that he could not undertake the leadership in the Commons if Brougham remained there in an official capacity to domineer over him, the well-known arrangement was made.

*Lord Cottenham (Pepys, Solicitor-General in Lord Melbourne's former Administration).

†Which last alternative is now known to have been the case.

miraculous acquirements of my Lord Cottenham, or that his downcast vision has been dazzled by the wide extended celebrity that surrounds with a halo the name of Bickersteth!* No, sir, we will not trench upon the manorial right of modesty which is the monopoly of your colleague, Sir Monsey Rolfe,† that public man on the *lucus a non lucendo* principle, that shadowy entity which all have heard of, few seen. An individual, it would appear, of a rare humility and admirable patience, and born, as it were, to exemplify the beauty of resignation.

I believe, therefore, that you claimed the office — that you claimed your right, and that you were refused it. That must have been a bitter moment, Sir John Campbell — a moment which might have made you recollect, perhaps even repeat, the Johnsonian definition of a Whig.‡ You have not hitherto been held a man deficient in spirit, or altogether uninfluenced by that nobler ambition which spurs us on to great careers, and renders the esteem of our fellow-countrymen not the least valuable reward of our exertions. When therefore you were thus insulted, why did you not resent the insult? When your fair ambition was thus scurvily balked, why not have gratified it by proving to a sympathising nation that you were at least worthy of the high post to which you aspired? He who aims to be the guardian of the

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*Afterwards Lord Langdale.

†Afterwards Lord Cranworth.

‡WHIG. The name of a faction. *Johnson's Dictionary*, 1st edition.

Boswell. I drank chocolate, sir, this morning with Mr. Eld, and to my no small surprise found him to be a Staffordshire Whig, a being which I did not believe had existed.

Johnson. Sir, there are rascals in all countries.

Croker's Boswell, edition 1848, p. 606.

honour of the Crown, should at least prove that he is competent to protect his own. You ought not to have quitted the Minister's ante-chamber the King's Attorney-General.

Why did you, then? Because, as you inform us, your lady is to be ennobled. Is it the carnival, that such jests pass current? Is it part of the code of etiquette in this saturnalia of Whig manners, that the honour of a man is to be vindicated by a compliment to a woman? One cannot refrain from admiring, too, the consistent propriety of the whole arrangement. A gentleman, whom his friends announce as a resolved republican, and to whom, but for this slight circumstance, they assert would have been entrusted the custody of the Great Seal, is to be hoisted up into the House of Lords in the masquerade of a Baron; while yourself, whose delicate and gracious panegyric of the Peers of England is still echoing from the movement benches of the House of Commons to the reeking cellars of the Cowgate, find the only consolation for your wounded honour in your son inscribing his name in the *libro d'oro* of our hereditary legislators. Why, if Mr. O'Connell were but simultaneously called up by the title of Baron Rathcormac,* in honour of his victory, the batch would be quite complete.

What compensation is it for the injured interests, and what consolation to the outraged honour, of the bar, that your amiable lady is to become a peeress? On the contrary, you have inflicted a fresh stigma on the body of which you are the chief. You have shown to the world that the leading advocate of the

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*A small market town and polling place in the county of Cork.

day, the King's Attorney-General, will accept a bribe! Nay! start not. For the honour of human nature, for the honour of your high profession, of which I am the friend, I will believe that in the moment of overwhelming mortification you did not thus estimate that glittering solace, but such, believe me, the English nation will ever esteem the coronet of Strathedeen.

Was the grisly spectre of Sir William Horne* the blooming Eve that tempted you to pluck this fatal fruit? Was it the conviction that a rebellious Attorney-General might be shelved that daunted the hereditary courage of the Campbell? What, could you condescend to be treated by the Minister like a froward child — the parental Viscount shaking in one hand a rod, and in the other waving a toy?

I have long been of opinion, that, among other perfected and projected mischief, there has been on the part of the Whigs a systematic attempt to corrupt the English bar. I shall avail myself of another and early opportunity to discuss this important subject. At present I will only observe, that whether they do or

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* Attorney-General in Earl Grey's Ministry, 1832. Under date February 26, 1835, Greville writes: 'Horne, the late Attorney-General, seems likely to fall between two stools. When Brougham proposed to him to take a puisne judgeship he said he had been an equity lawyer all his life, and had no mind to enter on a course of common law for which he was not qualified, and proposed that he should not go the circuits and be Deputy Speaker of the House of Lords. Brougham told him there would be no difficulty, and then told Lord Grey he had settled it with Horne, but did not tell him what Horne required. The general movement was made, and when Horne desired to see Lord Grey he told him that his terms could not be complied with, so he became a victim to the trickery and shuffling of the Chancellor, who wanted to get him out and did not care how.'

do not obtain their result, your conduct has anticipated the consequence of their machinations; the Whigs may corrupt the bar of England, but you, sir, have degraded it.

January 19, 1836.

LETTER III.

TO

MR. THOMAS ATTWOOD, M.P.

JANUARY 21, 1836

LETTER III.

[Thomas Attwood—the 'King Tom' of Cobbett's 'Political Register'—was one of the most violent agitators of the pre-Reform era and the real inventor of the Caucus. His father, Matthias Attwood, was an ironmaster of Hales Owen, who realised a considerable fortune by obtaining a monopoly of Swedish iron. With this capital he associated himself with Mr. Richard Spooner the elder, and founded the once famous banking house of Spooner, Attwood & Co., with headquarters in Birmingham and a branch in Grace-church Street, London. Thomas Attwood presided over the Birmingham business, and distinguished himself from a very early period by the vehemence of his views on financial and political subjects. When the famous Orders in Council during the hostilities with America in 1812 were promulgated, Attwood made himself conspicuous by the violence with which he denounced them, and when in 1817 specie payments were resumed he was equally loud in his condemnation of that step. In fact, throughout the whole of his life he posed as a currency reformer as well as a Radical politician, and at one period appeared before the world as the author of a couple of forgotten pamphlets on the advantages of a paper currency. His theories found small acceptance, and, stung by the indifference with which they were received, he threw himself with ardour into Radical agitation. During the period between 1820 and the passage of the Whig Reform Bill of 1832 he was exceedingly active, and when in 1829 an unwilling Government had passed the Roman Catholic Relief Bill (Catholic Emancipation) he founded at once the notorious 'Political Union' of Birmingham. His power in Birmingham at this time was something enormous. Mr. McCullagh Torrens, in his 'Life of Lord Melbourne,' quotes a letter in which the then ex-Minister speaks of

him as 'the most influential man in England,' and Mr. R. K. Dent, in the extraordinarily sumptuous three volumes which commemorate the glories of 'Old and New Birmingham,' states that in the month of July, 1812, his fellow-townsmen presented Mr. Attwood with a silver cup weighing 128 ounces, the cost of which was subscribed in sixpences. From 1812 his popularity had gone on increasing. He had opposed the monopoly of the East India Company, and, if the accounts of his admirers are to be credited, he was the main instrument in breaking it down, and he was for many years an advocate of all those proposals which are associated with the name of Liberalism. Throughout the whole of the Reform agitation he was one of its most conspicuous figures, and shared with 'Orator Hunt' the very questionable glory of inciting the working classes to rebellion.

The 'Political Union for the Protection of Public Rights' was the outcome of a meeting held in the Royal Hotel at Birmingham at which Attwood presided, supported by Messrs. Scholefield, Muntz, and Shorthouse—the last the father of the author of 'John Inglesant'—and the spirit in which it was devised may be guessed from a few phrases printed in capital letters in the requisition to the High Bailiff for a towns-meeting. The requisitionists speak of the 'gross mismanagement of public affairs,' the 'general distress which now afflicts the country,' which is only to be remedied by 'an effectual reform in the Commons House of Parliament.' They talk of the further 'redress of public wrongs and grievances,' and speak of a 'political union between the lower and middle classes of the people' as the only means by which that end may be attained. The French Revolution of 1830, which had a much greater share in bringing about the Whig Revolution of 1832 than is commonly believed,* was earnestly watched in Birmingham, and at a dinner to celebrate that event, at which between 3,000 and 4,000 persons sat down, Attwood made what appears to have been the first amongst many rather foolish speeches on the subject of reform. One sentence will show its character. After the 'Union Hymn' had been sung Attwood asked his excited audience, 'Where is the one among you who would not follow me to the death in a righteous

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* *See* Roebuck's *History of the Whig Ministry of* 1830, vol. ii. p. 3 *et seq.*

cause?' The answer was given by the whole assembly, 'who rose as one man and shouted, "All!"' At a meeting in 1831 Attwood made another bombastic speech, allusion to which will be found in 'Runnymede's' letter, in which he said, 'If the king required it, they could produce him in this district at his order within a month two armies each of them as numerous and brave as that which conquered at Waterloo.' When the Lords threw out the Reform Bill, the 'Political Union' issued a proclamation calling for Political Unions like itself all over the country, and threatening in no uncertain manner the alternative of civil war. There is, indeed, an affectation of peacefulness and moderation, but when after speaking of the horrors of war as 'the last dread alternative of an oppressed nation,' the manifesto goes on to say that the reformers will 'humble the oligarchy to the dust,' there cannot be much doubt of what is meant. That paper bore the signature of Thomas Attwood as chairman of the Union.

At this time also Attwood distinguished himself in other ways. Having already in 1830 proposed in writing the formation of an association the members of which should pledge themselves to pay no taxes if the Government of the day should dare to interfere in the conflict between Belgium and Holland, he next suggested a similar association for the coercion of the Government in the matter of the Reform Bill, and presided at a meeting which was held to vote thanks to Lords Althorp and John Russell, and to pass a resolution to 'stop the supplies.' The Reform Bill once passed, Liberals on all sides recognised the share which Attwood had had in its success, and the City of London, on that ground, presented him with its freedom. In the course of his reply he made a somewhat curious admission: 'I may have given offence,' said he, 'to abler men because I had recourse to measures which trenched on the verge of the law; but I did not resort to such measures until I saw that the extremity of the country required extreme remedies.' After these 'extreme remedies'—which, by the way, have always been very much to the taste of Birmingham—nothing could be more natural than that Attwood should be one of the first two members for the newly enfranchised borough. He sat in Parliament until 1839 speaking very frequently there and almost as frequently in public meetings outside. It cannot be said that he was altogether successful in his capacity of member. The

House of Commons—at all events until within a very recent period—was one of the most keenly critical assemblies in the world, and one in which the most pretentious of demagogues speedily found his level. The Rochdale manufacturer who went in as 'the successor to Richard Cobden' was made chairman of the committee for the selection of cigars, and has never held any more distinguished place in the House. In like manner Attwood, who demanded the abolition of the House of Lords and posed almost even as a Republican, never succeeded in winning the ear of the House. When, as in August, 1835, he boasted having just returned from a meeting of '10,000 individuals' (men, women, and children of course) at which it had been observed that 'under the present march of education and diffusion of knowledge, the time would soon approach when the country would neither need a House of Lords nor a King,' members simply smiled and no one attempted to answer. And when, as in February, 1836, he presented a petition from 20,000 'individuals' of Birmingham for the Reform of the House of Lords, and made a somewhat absurd speech on the occasion, the petition was ordered to lie upon the table, after a vigorous protest from 2,000 inhabitant householders 'against the proceedings of this self-constituted body' had been read by Mr. Dugdale, M.P. for North Warwickshire.

Attwood's parliamentary career was not prolonged. As the writer of an obituary notice which was published in the 'Annual Register' for 1856 put the matter, 'when Mr. Attwood had sat for some years in Parliament he began to perceive that the reformed House of Commons was not more disposed to accept his currency theories than the unreformed, and he thought also that it had shown a decided inability to grapple with great questions.' He therefore applied for the Chiltern Hundreds in January, 1840, and subsided into private life. He died on March 6, 1856, at Great Malvern, and in 1859 his fellow-townsmen erected a colossal statue to his memory. When in 1865 the bank of Attwood, Spooner, Marshall, and Co. suspended payment with a deficiency of 340,000*l.*, bringing down in its fall the Penny Bank, in which were invested nearly 10,000*l.*, the property of the poorest class of artisans and of their children, Attwood's statue narrowly escaped destruction, but was spared, apparently because he had been 'the Father of Political Unions.']

To Mr. Thomas Attwood, M.P.

SIR,—You may be surprised at this letter being addressed to you; you may be more surprised when I inform you that this address is not occasioned by any conviction of your political importance. I deem you a harmless, and I do not believe you to be an ill-meaning, individual. You are a provincial banker labouring under a financial monomania. But amid the seditious fanfaronade which your unhappy distemper occasions you periodically to vomit forth, there are fragments of good old feelings which show you are not utterly denationalised in spite of being 'the friend of all mankind,'* and contrast with the philanthropic verbiage of your revolutionary rhetoric like the odds and ends of ancient art which occasionally jut forth from the modern rubbish of an edifice in a classic land—symptoms of better days, and evidences of happier intellect.

The reason that I have inscribed this letter to your consideration is, that you are a fair representative of a considerable class of your countrymen—the class who talk political nonsense; and it is these with whom, through your medium, I would now communicate.

I met recently with an observation which rather amused me. It was a distinction drawn in some

*A phrase used by Attwood to describe Mr. Muntz: 'My friend and your friend; the friend of humanity and benevolence, the friend of all mankind.'

journal between high nonsense and low nonsense. I thought that distinction was rather happily illustrated at the recent meeting of your Union, which, by-the-bye, differs from its old state as the drivellings of idiotism from the frenzy of insanity. When your chairman, who, like yourself, is 'the friend of all mankind,' called Sir Robert Peel 'an ass,'* I thought that Spartan description might fairly range under the head of low nonsense; but when you yourself, as if in contemptuous and triumphant rivalry with his plebeian folly, announced to us that at the sound of your blatant voice 100,000 armed men would instantly rise in Birmingham, it occurred to me that Nat Lee himself could scarcely compete with you in your claim to the more patrician privilege of uttering high nonsense. If indeed you produce such marvels, the name of Attwood will be handed down to posterity in heroic emulation with that of Cadmus; he produced armed men by a process almost as simple, but the teeth of the Theban king must yield to the jaw of the Birmingham delegate, though I doubt

*At the meeting of the Birmingham Political Union on Monday, January 18, 1836, to address the King and petition the House of Commons for a change in the constitution of the House of Lords, which called forth this letter, Attwood said: 'Sir Robert Peel in his Tamworth letter boasted that he was able to carry on the Government, but in a House of Commons of his own choosing he was beaten on the election of Speaker (i.e., when Sir Charles Sutton was displaced by Mr. Abercrombie), and then he quarrelled with everybody and everything, because that old humbug had been dismissed. What did he do then? Why, he lost everything, and courted, and flattered, and greased over as he had been till one could hardly see him, off he went again to Tamworth and acknowledged, like an ass as he was, that he had been completely deceived.' Mr. Muntz, the chairman of the meeting, had about half an hour before distinguished himself by applying the same epithet to Sir Robert Peel.

not the same destiny would await both batches of warriors.*

But these 100,000 armed men are only the advanced guard, the imperial guard of Brummagem, the heralds of a mightier host. Nay, compared with the impending legions, they can only count as pioneers, or humble sappers at the best. Twenty millions of men are to annihilate the Tories. By the last census, I believe the adult male population of Great Britain was computed at less than 4,000,000. Whence the subsidiary levies are to be obtained, we may perhaps be informed the next time some brainless Cleon, at the pitch of his voice, bawls forth his rampant folly at the top of Newhall hill.

Superficial critics have sometimes viewed, in a spirit of narrow-minded scepticism, those traditionary accounts of armed hosts which startle us in the credulous or the glowing page of rude or ancient annals. But what was the Great King on the heights of Salamis or in the straits of Issus, what was Gengis Khan, what Tamerlane, compared with Mr. Thomas

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*According to *Aris's Birmingham Gazette*, the meeting at which this speech was made was held in the Town Hall, and 'at this time (noon) the building was about half filled, but about one o'clock the number began to increase, and for an hour afterwards the hall was two-thirds full.' It was upon this occasion that Attwood asserted that 'within one single week the Union could produce 100,000 fighting men upon Newhall Hill,' and further, that 'if the Tories had their way—if they again recovered their ascendancy—a deluge of blood must and would be shed in England.' Later on in the same speech Attwood called for 5,000*l.* to send delegates all over England to carry on a campaign for the reform of the House of Lords, adding, that 'he doubted not the influence which the men of Birmingham possessed over their countrymen would command the success of 20,000,000 of people and 20,000,000 of hearts. When the men of Birmingham offered to guide them, these 20,000,000 of brave men would respond to their call.'

Attwood of Birmingham? The leader of such an army may well be 'the friend of all mankind,' if only to recruit his forces from his extensive connections.

The truth is, Xerxes and Darius, and the valiant leaders of the Tartars and the Mongols, were ignorant of the mystical yet expeditious means by which 20,000,000 of men are brought into the field by a modern demagogue, to change a constitution or to subvert an empire. When they hoisted their standard, their chieftains rallied round it, bringing to the array all that population of the country who were not required to remain at home to maintain its order or civilisation. The peasant quitted his plough and the pastor his flock, and the artisan without employ hurried from the pauperism of Babylon or the idleness of Samarcand. But these great leaders with their diminutive forces which astounded the Lilliputian experience of our ancestors, had no conception, with their limited imaginations, of the inexhaustible source whence the ranks of a popular leader may be swollen; they had no idea of 'THE PEOPLE.' It is 'the people' that is to supply their great successor with his millions.

As in private life, we are accustomed to associate the circle of our acquaintance with the phrase 'THE WORLD,' so in public I have invariably observed that 'THE PEOPLE' of the politician is the circle of his interests. The 'people' of the Whigs are the ten-pounders who vote in their favour. At present the municipal constituencies* are almost considered by

* An allusion to the Municipal Reform Act (5 & 6 Will. IV. cap. 76) which abolished the ancient franchises, and placed local self-government in the hands of the ratepayers. It was the first work of Lord Melbourne's second administration, which came into office April 18,

Lords Melbourne and John Russell as, in some instances, to have afforded legitimate claims of being deemed part and parcel of the nation; but I very much fear that the course of events will degrade those bodies from any lengthened participation in this ennobling quality. It is quite clear that the electors of Northamptonshire have forfeited all right to be held portion of 'the people,' since their return of Mr. Maunsell;* the people of Birmingham are doubtless those of the inhabitants who huzza the grandiloquence of Mr. Atwood; and the people of England, perchance, those discerning individuals, who, if he were to make a provincial tour of oratory, might club together in the different towns to give him a dinner. I hardly think that, all together, these quite amount to 20,000,000.

Yourself and the school to which you belong are apt to describe the present struggle as one between the Conservatives and the people—these Conservatives consisting merely of 300 or 400 peers, and their retainers. You tell us in the same breath, with admirable consistency, that you possess the name, but

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1835, after the short-lived Government of Sir Robert Peel—a Government which lasted only from December 10, 1834, to April 8, 1835, and which went out on the question of the Irish Church. The catastrophe was notable inasmuch as it was the first fruits of that alliance between the Irish party and the 'base, bloody, and brutal Whigs' whom O'Connell had abused so heartily and for so many years. The alliance was brought about at Lichfield House, in St. James's Square, early in the year 1835, and is consequently generally known as the 'Lichfield House compact.'

*Thomas Philip Maunsell, of Thorpe Malsor, sat for North Northamptonshire from 1835 to 1857. A Conservative country gentleman, not distinguished as an orator, but faithful to his party. He was succeeded in the representation of North Northamptonshire by Mr. George Ward Hunt, who was Chancellor of the Exchequer from February to December, 1858.

not the heart of the King; that the Court is secretly, and the Peerage openly, opposed to you; the Church you announce as even beholding you with pious terror. The Universities, and all chartered bodies, come under your ban. The Bar is so hostile, that you have been obliged to put the Great Seal in commission for a year,* and have finally, and from sheer necessity, entrusted it to the custody of an individual† whom by that very tripartite trusteeship you had previously declared unfit for its sole guardianship. The gentlemen of England are against you to a man because of their corn monopoly; the yeomanry from sheer bigotry; the cultivators of the soil because they are the slaves of the owners, and the peasantry because they are the slaves of the cultivators. The freemen of the towns are against you because they are corrupt; the inhabitants of rural towns because they are compelled; and the press is against you because it is not free. It must be confessed that you and your party can give excellent reasons for any

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*William IV., after Brougham's progress through Scotland in 1834, and after the famous letter in the *Times* which declared that the fall of the Whigs in that year was the exclusive work of the Queen, absolutely refused to allow him to resume the Chancellorship. There was a personal as well as a political reason for this slight. According to Campbell, Brougham was allowed to retain the Great Seal for some time after his colleagues had been deprived of the insignia of their offices, in order that he might deliver judgment in the cases which had been argued before him. At the proper moment he was bound by the established etiquette to return the Great Seal into the hands of the Sovereign. Instead of doing so he sent the *clavis regni* to the King in a bag by the hands of a messenger, 'as a fishmonger,' says Campbell, 'might have sent a salmon for the King's dinner.' When Lord Melbourne formed his second administration in 1835, the Great Seal was consequently put into commission, the Commissioners being the Master of the Rolls, the Vice-Chancellor, and Mr. Justice Bosanquet.

†Pepys, Lord Cottenham.

chance opposition which you may happen to experience. You are equally felicitous in accounting for the suspicious glance which the fundholder shoots at you; nor can I sufficiently admire the admirable candour with which the prime organ of your faction has recently confessed that every man who possesses 500*l.* per annum is necessarily your opponent. After this, it is superfluous to remark that the merchants, bankers, and ship-owners of this great commercial and financial country are not to be found in your ranks, and the sneers at our national glory and imperial sway which ever play on the patriotic lips of Whigs, both high and low, only retaliate the undisguised scorn with which their anti-national machinations are viewed by the heroes of Waterloo and the conquerors of Trafalgar. Deduct these elements of a nation, deduct all this power, all this authority, all this skill, and all this courage, all this learning, all this wealth, and all these numbers, and all the proud and noble and national feelings which are their consequence, and what becomes of your 'people?' It subsides into an empty phrase, a juggle as pernicious and as ridiculous as your paper currency!

But if you and your friends, 'the friends of all mankind,' have, as indeed I believe you have not, the brute force and the numerical superiority of the population of this realm marshalled under your banners, do not delude yourselves into believing for a moment that you are in any degree more entitled from that circumstance to count yourselves the leaders of the English people. A nation is not a mere mass of bipeds with no strength but their animal vigour, and no collective grandeur but that of their numbers. There is required to constitute that great creation, a

people, some higher endowments and some rarer qualities,—honour, and faith, and justice; a national spirit fostered by national exploits; a solemn creed expounded by a pure and learned priesthood; a jurisprudence which is the aggregate wisdom of ages; the spirit of chivalry, the inspiration of religion, the supremacy of law; free order, and that natural gradation of ranks which are but a type and image of the economy of the universe; a love of home and country, fostered by traditionary manners and consecrated by customs that embalm ancestral deeds; learned establishments, the institutions of charity, a skill in refined and useful arts, the discipline of fleets and armies; and above all, a national character, serious and yet free, a character neither selfish nor conceited, but which is conscious that as it owes much to its ancestors, so also it will not stand acquitted if it neglect its posterity;—these are some of the incidents and qualities of a great nation like the people of England. Whether these are to be found in 'the people' who assemble at the meetings of your Union, or whether they may be more successfully sought for among their 20,000,000 of brethren at hand, I leave you, sir, to decide. I shall only observe, that if I be correct in my estimate of the constituent elements of the English people, I am persuaded that in spite of all the arts of plundering factions and mercenary demagogues, they will recognise, with a grateful loyalty, the venerable cause of their welfare in the august fabric of their ancient constitution.

January 21, 1836.

LETTER IV.

TO

LORD BROUGHAM

JANUARY 23, 1836

LETTER IV.

[Brougham was at this period at the height of his unpopularity. A few years before the case had been very different. In 1828 he had been a guest at Panshanger, and Greville speaks of the extreme pleasure he derived from his society. 'Brougham,' he says, 'is certainly one of the most remarkable men I ever met; to say nothing of what he is in the world, his almost childish gaiety and animal spirits, his humour mixed with sarcasm, but not ill-natured; his wonderful information and the facility with which he handles every subject, from the most grave and severe to the most trifling, displaying a mind full of varied and extensive information, and a memory which has suffered nothing to escape it;' and so forth. Rogers, too, shared in the very general belief in Brougham's extraordinary capacity. Everybody knows the famous quotation: 'This morning Solon, Lycurgus, Demosthenes, Archimedes, Sir Isaac Newton, Lord Chesterfield, and a great many more, went away in one post-chaise.' By 1830 a change had come over the spirit and temper of the Whig leaders with regard to Brougham. He was no longer regarded with complacency, and his ambition was found to be exceedingly inconvenient. When Lord Grey formed his administration in November, 1830, the difficulty which first made itself felt was, as Lord Campbell puts it, 'What is to be done with Brougham?' Lord Grey was afraid of him in the Cabinet, knowing his restless eagerness to distinguish himself, and he dreaded the alternative of leaving him out of the new administration, knowing also how dangerous an enemy he might be. A Radical opposition headed by Brougham would ruin any Government of moderate Whigs. Lord Grey suggested that he should be made Attorney-General; Lord Althorp shook his head but did not oppose the experiment, and Brougham was accordingly sent for. He

called on Lord Grey in due course; the offer was made, but rejected with every mark of indignation. In conversation with Lord Grey he uttered the portentous threat, that he would support the administration only 'in as far as he conscientiously could;' and in the House of Commons the same night he let off the angry temper which had been accumulating for some days past. 'It so happened,' says Campbell, 'that this was the very day for which his notice stood on the great question of Parliamentary Reform, and he entered the House evidently in a very perturbed state, having resolved to bring it on, whatever confusion might arise from such a discussion in the existing distracted state of the Government.' At the request of Lord Althorp he postponed his motion, saying, after a brief explanation of his repugnance to doing so, 'As no change that may take place in the administration can by any possibility affect me, I beg it to be understood that in putting off the motion I will put it off until the 25th of this month, and no longer. I will then, and at no more distant period, bring forward the question of Parliamentary Reform, whatever may be the then state of affairs, and whosoever may then be His Majesty's Ministers.'

He intended, in short, to be Chancellor, and he succeeded in forcing Lord Grey to give him the post in spite of the fact that he was probably the most unfit person who could have been chosen for it, and that he was of all men the least likely to distinguish himself or to add lustre to the administration in the House of Lords. His talents were those of a *nisi prius* advocate. Versatile as he was, he knew but little of law and nothing of equity; and Lord Grey was naturally unwilling that his administration should be weighted with a Chancellor whose conduct might seriously discredit it. Campbell, indeed, tells an absurd story of Lord Grey being 'platonically under the fascination of the beautiful Lady Lyndhurst,' and of his being in consequence anxious to retain her husband as his Chancellor. The political circumstances of the time are, however, quite sufficient to explain the hesitation about Brougham without any such blundering scandal. In the end Brougham's obstinacy prevailed, and by November 20 it was announced authoritatively that he was to take the Great Seal. It was not expected that he would have accepted this piece of promotion. 'I was persuaded,' says Greville, 'that he had made to himself a political existence the like of which no man had ever before possessed, and that to have refused the Great

Seal would have appeared more glorious than to take it; intoxicated with his Yorkshire honours, swollen with his own importance, and holding in his hands questions which he could employ to thwart, embarrass, and ruin any Ministry, I thought he meant to domineer in the House of Commons, and to gather popularity throughout the country.' Such seems to have been the general opinion outside official circles; but moderate men rejoiced in his election, fancying that when he had taken his seat upon the woolsack his terrible vivacity might be fairly checked.

As Chancellor, Brougham was eminently unsuccessful. He tried his hand at legislation, but failed most conspicuously. He attempted by getting Lyndhurst made Lord Chief Baron to muzzle that doughty foe of the Whigs, and succeeded only in putting a new weapon into his hands. He assumed ridiculous airs, and by his egregious vanity contrived to offend the King most seriously. On one occasion when on his way to the Drawing Room he was stopped by the guard with the information that the King had given orders* that no carriage save that of the Speaker should pass through the Horse Guards, but he defiantly called to the coachman to drive on, and broke through the ranks—an escapade which grievously affronted William IV., and brought down upon Brougham a solemn reproof in the House of Lords. When in the midst of the Reform struggle Parliament was suddenly dissolved, he actually, according to Roebuck, usurped the functions of royalty by giving orders not merely for the regalia and royal robes to be prepared, but even for the movements of the troops. If Roebuck's story be true—and there is reason to believe that it is, in spite of Campbell's denial of it—no one can be surprised at the King accusing his Chancellor of high treason. In the House of Lords he was not popular. His manner was needlessly offensive at times, as is occasionally the case with successful lawyers; his loquacity was intolerable; and he sometimes fell into errors of taste, which excused if they did not justify Campbell's more than once repeated insinuation of intemperance. Again, when Lord Melbourne formed his first administration Brougham assumed the air of a dictator, and though he formally spoke of the Premier as 'my noble friend at the head of the Government,' he habitually addressed him, to Mel-

* It is understood that the order was really given by the Duke of Cumberland as 'Gold Stick.'

bourne's intense annoyance and disgust, as 'Lamb' or 'William;' while in the royal presence he is said to have spoken in a haughty and dictatorial manner, which added to the offence given by his previous escapades. Greville says in his diary, under date August 29, 1835, 'The House of Lords has become a bear-garden since Brougham has been in it.' In short, he had by the middle of 1834 done quite enough to justify the 'Times' in saying, as it did, that 'For some months past Lord Brougham has been under a morbid excitement, seldom evinced by those of his Majesty's subjects who are suffered to remain masters of their own actions.'

His crowning folly was, however, his tour in Scotland in the autumn of that year, where the Whigs and the Radicals united to give him a startling reception, and whence he wrote perpetually to the King by post, enraging the sovereign and proving to all reasonable people, by his egregious vanity and self-complacency, that his reason was endangered. He gave further offence by carrying the Great Seal out of England, the King being decidedly of opinion that no judge could legally leave the country without his permission, and that the Great Seal was absolutely sacred. His return was followed by the dismissal of the Whig Ministry by the King—the last occasion on which the sovereign of these realms has taken so decided and so independent a step. It was certainly done in a very peremptory fashion. William IV. was at Brighton when Lord Spencer died, and Lord Althorp was consequently translated to the Upper House. Lord Melbourne went down to make arrangements, and saw the King on the afternoon of Thursday, November 14. On the following day he had a second audience, when he received his dismissal and was informed that the Duke of Wellington had been 'sent for.' Melbourne returned to London and received a visit from Brougham, who was on his way to Holland House. As a matter of course the Chancellor heard the news, but was compelled to promise silence. To the disgust of the other members of the Ministry, the *Times* of the next morning contained a full and particular account of the whole proceeding, with the addition that 'the Queen had done it all.'

That letter sealed Brougham's fate. The King was furious. He had never liked the Whigs and he hated Brougham, whose 'mountebank exhibitions,' as Greville calls his performances in Scotland, had

thoroughly disgusted him. When Peel's short-lived administration went out of office in May, 1835, and Lord Melbourne returned to power, Brougham fully expected to be restored to his old place of Chancellor. He was disappointed. The King 'wanted never to see his ugly face again,' and the other members of the new Ministry dreaded his intolerable loquacity and his capacity for compromising both himself and his colleagues. He was accordingly passed over. The Great Seal was put in commission, as already mentioned, and Brougham retired to his seat in Westmoreland, where he fretted himself into an attack of mania which, if not absolutely acute, was at least sufficiently so to cause his physicians to keep him under gentle restraint. Unpopularity speedily followed disgrace, and it is not too much to say that at the accession of her present Majesty to the throne, there was no one whose general conduct commanded less respect than that of the ex-Chancellor. His services to that extremely unpleasant personage, 'England's injured Queen,' were forgotten; his exertions in the great and sacred cause of Reform were unheeded; even his contributions to the *Penny Magazine* and to the publications of the Society for the Confusion of Useless Knowledge were put on one side. All that people remembered was that a Scotch lawyer, not of the first rank — 'a bully and a buffoon,' as Sheil called him — had thrust himself into the office of Lord Chancellor of England and had played sundry fantastic tricks therein, with the effect of alienating from himself even those whom he might most reasonably have expected to be his staunchest allies. The following passage from Lord Campbell's Autobiography will explain many things. Writing of 1835, he says: 'In an interview I had with Lord Melbourne he said to me: "Brougham is such a man that I cannot act with him." . . . The removal from the Cabinet of Lord Grey, of whom he stood in some awe, probably aggravated his rashness, capriciousness, and *faithlessness*. He would lay important Bills on the table of the House of Lords for "measures" of which he had never dropped a hint in the Cabinet; he would promise places five or six deep which were not in his gift; he would communicate irregularly with the King upon subjects out of his department; and he was strongly suspected of writing anonymously against some of his colleagues in the newspapers.'

To Lord Brougham.

MY LORD,—In your elaborate mimicry of Lord Bacon,* your most implacable enemies must confess that, at least in one respect, you have rivalled your great original—you have contrived to get disgraced. In your Treatise on Hydrostatics you may not have completely equalled the fine and profound researches of 'the Lord Chancellor of Nature;' your most ardent admirers may hesitate in preferring the *Penny Magazine* to the *Novum Organum;* even the musings of Jenkins and the meditations of Tomkins† may not be deemed to come quite as much home 'to men's business and bosoms' as the immortal Essays; but no one can deny, be they friend or foe, that you are as much shunned as their author—almost as much despised.

Whether the fame of his philosophical discoveries and the celebrity of his literary exploits may console the late Lord Chancellor of William IV. in the solitude of his political annihilation, as they brought balm to the bruised spirit of the late Lord Chancellor of James I. in the loneliness of his sublime degradation, he best can decide who may witness the writhings

*This allusion to Lord Bacon is not a mere gratuitous piece of spite. 'He thought Lord Bacon's fate was most to be envied. . . . As a judge he boldly and openly said he should excel him . . . he had treatises part begun and part conceived in his own mind which would excel the *Novum Organum*.'—Campbell, *Lives of the Chancellors*, vol. viii. p. 382.

†See Brougham's Dialogue, 'On the Objects, Advantages, and Pleasures of Science.'

of your tortured memory and the restless expedients of your irritable imagination. At present, I am informed that your Lordship is occupied in a translation of your Treatise of Natural Theology into German, on the Hamiltonian system. The translation of a work on a subject of which you know little, into a tongue of which you know nothing, seems the climax of those fantastic freaks of ambitious superficiality which our lively neighbours describe by a finer term than quackery. But if the perturbed spirit can only be prevented from preying on itself by literary occupation, let me suggest to you, in preference, the propriety of dedicating the days of your salutary retirement to a production of more general interest, and, if properly treated, of more general utility. A memoir of the late years of your career might afford your fellow-countrymen that of which at present they are much in want—a great moral lesson. In its instructive pages we might perhaps learn how a great empire has nearly been sacrificed to the aggrandisement of a rapacious faction; how, under the specious garb of patriotism, a band of intriguing politicians, connected by no community of purpose or of feeling but the gratification of their own base interests, forfeited all the pledges of their previous careers, or violated all the principles of their practised systems; how, at length, in some degree palled with plundering the nation, according to the usual course, they began plundering themselves; how the weakest, and probably the least impure,* were sacrificed to those

*This phrase is apparently intended as in some sort of way a balm to Brougham. His colleagues had jobbed, but he had, in his own phrase, 'kept his hands clean.' The evidence in the Edmunds case will show how far the boast was warranted.

who were more bold and bad; and, finally, how your Lordship especially would have shrouded yourself in the mantle, while you kicked away the prophet.

If your Lordship would have but the courageous candour to proceed in this great production, you might, perhaps, favour us with a graphic narrative of that memorable interview between yourself and the present Premier, when, with that easy elocution and unembarrassed manner which characterise the former favourite of Castlereagh, the present First Lord of the Treasury,* robbing you of the fruit after you had plundered the orchard,† broke to your startled vision and incredulous ear the unforeseen circumstance that your Lordship was destined to be the scapegoat of Whiggism, and to be hurried into the wilderness with all the curses of the nation and all the sins of your companions. This animated sketch would form an admirable accompaniment to the still richer picture when you offered your congratulatory condolence to Earl Grey on his long meditated retirement from the onerous service of a country as grateful as his colleagues.

Your Lordship, who is well informed of what passes in the Cabinet, must have been scarcely less astonished than the public at the late legal arrangements.‡ Every post, till of late, must have brought you from the metropolis intelligence which must have filled you with anxiety almost maturing into

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*Lord Melbourne.

†An allusion to the intrigue by which Lord Grey was driven from office.

‡*i.e.* when the Chancellorship was put in commission. The patronage of the Lord Chancellor at this period was, it is worthy of note, enormous and proportionately valuable.

hope. But the lion was suddenly reported to be sick, and the jackals as suddenly grew bold. The Prime Minister consulted Sir Benjamin;* the Serjeant Surgeon shook his head, and they passed in trembling precipitation the paltry Rubicon of their spite. When we remember that one voice alone decided your fate, and that that voice issued from the son of Lord Grey, we seem to be recalled to the days of the Greek drama. Your Lordship, although an universalist, I believe, has not yet tried your hand at a tragedy; let me recommend this fresh illustration of the sublime destiny of the ancients. You have deserved a better fate, but not a degrading one; though Achilles caused the destruction of Troy, we deplore his ignoble end from the unequal progeny of Priam.

And is it possible,—are you indeed the man whose scathing voice, but a small lustre gone, passed like the lightning in that great Assembly where Canning grew pale before your terrible denunciation, and where even Peel still remembers your awful reply? Is this indeed the lord of sarcasm, the mighty master of invective? Is this, indeed, the identical man who took the offer of the Attorney-Generalship, and held it up to the scorn of the assembled Commons of England, and tore it, and trampled upon it, and spat upon it in their sympathising sight, and lived to offer the cold-blooded aristocrat who had dared to insult genius the consoling compensation of the Privy Seal?

For your Lordship has a genius: good or bad, it marks you out from the slaves who crouch to an O'Connell and insult a Brougham. Napoleon marched from Elba. You, too, may have your hundred days.

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*Brodie, Serjeant Surgeon to the King.

What though they think you are dying — what though your health is quaffed in ironical bumpers in the craven secrecy of their political orgies — what if, after all, throwing Brodie on one side and your Teutonic studies on the other, your spectre appear in the House of Lords on February 4! Conceive the confusion! I can see the unaccustomed robes tremble on the dignified form of the lordly Cottenham, and his spick and span coronet fall from the obstetric brow of the baronial Bickersteth,* Lansdowne taking refuge in philosophical silence, and Melbourne gulping courage in the goblets of Sion!†

January 23, 1836.

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* Bickersteth (Henry, Lord Langdale) was the son of a 'general practitioner.'

† Sion House; the seat of the Duke of Northumberland.

LETTER V.

TO

SIR ROBERT PEEL

JANUARY 26, 1836

LETTER V.

[The letter to Peel was written at the time of his retirement in 1835. The immediate cause of the downfall of the Administration was that disgraceful compact with the disaffected Irishry under the leadership of O'Connell, to which Lord Melbourne committed himself in the middle of March, 1835. Mr. McCullagh Torrens writes, that on the first Sunday in that month, the Duke of Sussex, uncle to the Queen, entertained all the members of the Whig Cabinet, with the exception of Brougham, who seems to have been somewhat pointedly left out. At that entertainment it was, it appears from another account, remarked that 'parties in this country were pretty equally balanced, and that power was really in the possession of some thirty Irish members.' The result was the Lichfield House meeting, a fortnight after the Duke's dinner, where it was resolved to merge past differences for the sake of securing an administration founded on the general principles in which all could consistently agree. In other words, the Whigs, whom the King had turned out of office and who had contrived during the three years which had elapsed since the passage of the Reform Bill to achieve an amount of unpopularity without precedent in the annals of any political party, magnanimously consented to forget the ruffianly abuse which O'Connell had heaped upon them for more than twenty years, in consideration of his giving the support of himself and his 'tail' to their measures. Melbourne, of course, denied officially having done anything of the sort in the most formal terms, and indeed it is not to be supposed that a Prime Minister would commit himself in any such absurd way. But that the compact was entered into is beyond all question, and the effect was seen in the vote on Lord John Russell's motion to appropriate the surplus funds of the Irish Church to

the purposes of general education in Ireland, a proposal which would never have been brought forward but for the determination of the Whigs to conciliate the Irish at any cost. On that occasion Peel was left in a minority first of twenty-five and then of twenty-seven, and found that, the fight being over, there was nothing left for him but to surrender. Melbourne returned to office, by no means to the satisfaction of either the King or the nation, and Peel remained in opposition, though at that time he was, as Lord Beaconsfield has put it elsewhere, the 'only hope' of a suffering people.]

To Sir Robert Peel.

SIR,—Before you receive this letter you will, in all probability, have quitted the halls and bowers of Drayton; those gardens and that library where you have realised the romance of Verulam and where you enjoy 'the lettered leisure' that Temple loved. Your present progress to the metropolis may not be as picturesque as that which you experienced twelve months back, when the confidence of your sovereign and the hopes of your country summoned you from the galleries of the Vatican and the city of the Cæsars.* It may not be as picturesque, but it is not less proud—it will be more triumphant. You are summoned now, like the Knight of Rhodes in Schiller's heroic ballad, as the only hope of a suffering island. The mighty dragon† is again abroad, de-

*When William IV. dismissed Lord Melbourne's first administration in July, 1834, Sir Robert Peel was in Italy, and a special messenger had to be sent out to bring him home, the Duke of Wellington consenting to carry on the Government until his return.

†O'Connell.

populating our fields, wasting our pleasant places, poisoning our fountains, menacing our civilisation. To-day he gorges on Liverpool, to-morrow he riots at Birmingham: as he advances nearer the metropolis, terror and disgust proportionately increase. Already we hear his bellow, more awful than hyænas; already our atmosphere is tainted with the venomous aspirations of his malignant lungs; yet a little while and his incendiary crest will flame on our horizon, and we shall mark the horrors of his insatiable jaws and the scaly volume of his atrocious tail!

In your chivalry alone is our hope. Clad in the panoply of your splendid talents and your spotless character, we feel assured that you will subdue this unnatural and unnational monster; and that we may yet see sedition, and treason, and rapine, rampant as they may have of late figured, quail before your power and prowess.

You are about to renew the combat under the most favourable auspices. When, a year ago, with that devotion to your country which is your great characteristic, scorning all those refined delights of fortune which are your inheritance and which no one is more capable of appreciating, and resigning all those pure charms of social and domestic life to which no one is naturally more attached, you threw yourself in the breach of the battered and beleaguered citadel of the constitution, you undertook the heroic enterprise with every disadvantage. The national party were as little prepared for the summons of their eminent leader by their sovereign as you yourself could have been when gazing on the frescoes of Michael Angelo. They had little organisation, less system; their hopes weak, their chieftains scattered; no

communication, no correspondence. Yet they made a gallant rally; and if their numerical force in the House of Commons were not equal, Sir, to your moral energy, the return of Lord Melbourne, at the best, was but a Pyrrhic triumph; nor perhaps were your powers ever sufficiently appreciated by your countrymen until you were defeated. Your abandonment of office was worthy of the motives which induced you originally to accept power. It was not petty pique; it was not a miserable sentiment of personal mortification, that led you to decide upon that step. You retained your post until you found you were endangering the King's prerogative, to support which you had alone accepted his Majesty's confidence. What a contrast does your administration as Prime Minister afford to that of one of your recent predecessors! No selfish views, no family aggrandisement, no family jobs, no nepotism. It cannot be said that during your administration the public service was surfeited with the incapable offspring of the Premier;* nor, after having nearly brought about a revolution for power which he has degraded, and lucre which degraded him, can it be said that you slunk into an undignified retirement with a whimpering Jeremiad over 'the pressure from without.' Contrast the serene retirement of Drayton and the repentant solitude of Howick; contrast the statesman, cheered after his factious defeat by the sympathy of a nation, with the coroneted Necker, the worn-out Machiavel,

*The complaint was made somewhat loudly in the Thirties that the whole of the most lucrative and most comfortable posts in the public service were monopolised—as Sir William Harcourt would say—by 'scions' of the three houses of Grey, Russell, and Elliott. Another family has since been added to the list—that of the Barings.

wringing his helpless hands over his hearth in remorseful despair and looking up with a sigh at his scowling ancestors!

But affairs are in a very different position now from what they were in November, 1835. You have an addition to the scutcheon of your fame in the emblazoned memory of your brief but masterly premiership: they cannot taunt you now with your vague promises of amelioration: you can appeal to the deeds of your Cabinet, and the plans which the applause of a nation sanctioned, and the execution of which the intrigues of a faction alone postponed. Never, too, since the peace of Paris, has the great national party of this realm been so united as at the present moment. It is no exaggeration to say, that among its leaders not the slightest difference of opinion exists upon any portion of their intended policy. Pitt himself, in the plenitude of his power, never enjoyed more cordial confidence than that which is now extended to you by every alleged section of the Conservative ranks; all private opinions, all particular theories, have merged in the resolute determination to maintain the English constitution in spite of Irish rebels, and to support, without cavil and criticism, its eminent champion in that great course of conduct which you have expounded to them.

That this admirable concord, a just subject of congratulation to the suffering people of this realm, has been in some degree the result of salutary conferences and frank explanations, I pretend not to deny; nor do I wish to conceal a circumstance in which I rejoice, that at no period have you displayed talents more calculated for the successful conduct of a great party than at the present; but, above all, this admirable

concord is to be attributed to the reason, that, however individuals of the Conservative party may have occasionally differed as to the means, they have at all times invariably agreed as to the end of their system, and that end is the glory of the empire and the prosperity of the people.

But it is not only among the leaders in the two Houses of Parliament that this spirit of union flourishes; it pervades the country. England has at length been completely organised; the battle which you told us must be fought in the registry courts has been fought, and in spite of the fanfaronade of the enemy, we know it has been won. Every parliamentary election that has of late occurred, in country or in town, has proved the disciplined power of the national party. It is not that they have merely exceeded their opponents at the polls, and often by vast majorities; but they have hastened to the polls with an enthusiasm which shows that they are animated with a very different spirit to that which impels their shamefaced rivals. Contrast these important triumphs with the guerilla warfare of the Government party on town-clerks and aldermen, and be convinced how important have been our efforts in the registry courts, by their feeble yet feverish attempts at what they style Reform Associations.

If we contrast also this faithful picture of the state and spirit of the party of which you are the leader with the situation of your opponents, the difference will be striking. Between the Opposition and the Government party there is this difference; that, however certain sections of the Opposition may occasionally have differed as to measures, their end has always been the same; whereas the several sections

of the Ministerial party, while for obvious reasons they agree as to measures, avowedly adopt them because they tend to different ends. The oligarchical Whigs, the English Radicals, the Irish Repealers—the patrons of rich livings, the enemies of Church and State, hereditary magistrates, professors of county reform—the sons of the nobles, the enemies of the peerage—the landed proprietors, the advocates of free corn, can only be united in a perverted sense. Their union then is this: to a certain point they all wish to destroy; but the Whigs only wish to destroy the Tories, the Radicals the constitution, and the Repealers the empire. The seeds of constant jealousy and inevitable separation are here then prodigally sown.

What are to be the tactics of this heterogeneous band time will soon develop. Dark rumours are about which intimate conduct too infamous, some would fain think, even for the Whigs. But as for myself, history and personal observation have long convinced me that there is no public crime of which the Whigs are not capable, and no public shame which for a sufficient consideration their oligarchical nerves would not endure. But whether they are going to betray their anti-national adherents, or only to bribe them, do you, Sir, proceed in your great course, free and undaunted. At the head of the most powerful and the most united Opposition that ever mustered on the benches opposite a trembling Minister, conscious that by returning you to your constituents he can only increase and consolidate your strength, what have you to apprehend? We look to you, therefore, with hope and with confidence. You have a noble duty to fulfil—let it be nobly done.

You have a great task to execute — achieve it with a great spirit. Rescue your sovereign from an unconstitutional thraldom, rescue an august Senate which has already fought the battle of the people, rescue our National Church, which our opponents hate, our venerable constitution, at which they scoff; but above all rescue that mighty body of which all these great classes and institutions are but some of the constituent and essential parts — rescue *the nation*.

January 26, 1836.

LETTER VI.

TO

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER

JANUARY 28, 1836

LETTER VI.

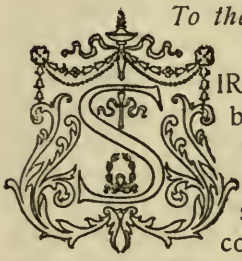
[Mr. Spring Rice (afterwards Lord Monteagle) was Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1836, and was, perhaps, one of the most utterly incompetent persons who ever filled that responsible office. His abilities were of the kind known as 'respectable'—that is to say, he took an ordinary degree at Cambridge and afterwards went to the Bar, where, however, he never practised. He wrote 'F.R.S.' and 'F.G.S.' after his name, but his attainments in geography and science were somewhat limited. He obtained office under the Whigs and held on to its emoluments with prehensile tenacity until the day of his death. Having entered Parliament in 1820, he sat for his native city of Limerick until 1832, when he obtained a seat for the borough of Cambridge, which he retained until his elevation to the peerage. He began as Under Secretary at the Home Office in 1827, in the administration of Mr. Canning; he held afterwards the post of Secretary of the Treasury from 1830 to 1834, in which latter year he was for a short time Colonial Secretary. When Lord Melbourne scrambled back into office in 1835, Mr. Spring Rice was promoted to the Exchequer and held the Chancellorship until 1839. In that year he recognised the fact of his incompetency, which had been patent to the rest of the world ever since his appointment, and having succeeded in getting the finances of the country into an all but inextricable confusion, he obtained from his party leaders the post of Controller of the Exchequer—a patent office value 2,000*l.* per annum—and a seat in the House of Lords as Baron Monteagle.

During his public life there was probably no man who excited more derision and contempt than Mr. Spring Rice. He was a dismally bad speaker, but that fact did not save the House from constant inflictions of his oratory. He was accused of perpetrating one or two flagrant jobs in the exercise of his office, and though the charge was indignantly denied it was never quite satisfactorily disproved. The

charge of meddlesomeness was frequently brought against him, and he was recognised as one of those 'uncrowned kings' whom Ireland produces with so much prodigality. As Mr. Hayward puts the matter, Mr. Spring Rice was not merely member for Limerick—he was 'member for all Ireland.' In that capacity he was naturally the friend and associate of O'Connell, and to that fact may undoubtedly be attributed much of the unpopularity of which Mr. Spring Rice was the victim about the time of the publication of this letter. His personal appearance was assuredly not in his favour. In the obituary notice which appeared in the 'Times' in 1856, it is remarked that 'He was undersized of stature . . . a most flagrant offence in the eyes of all Cabinets, and "H.B." (Doyle, the father of 'Punch's' Richard Doyle) made much of it. Dr. Chalmers had just then come to London to deliver addresses, and in one of his addresses he announced with all the emphasis which characterised his oratory, that the then age was an age of little men, or as he was supposed to pronounce it, "leetle" men. "H.B." seized upon the idea, and at once exhibited a specimen of the "leetle" men who governed the nation, Mr. Spring Rice being prominent amongst them. Sometimes, however, he got praise for his smallness, as when in combat with O'Connell, when O'Connell had turned against the Whigs, he fought and beat off the great Irish giant—on which occasion his merits were displayed to the eyes of the world in a picture of little David conquering Goliath.' Both caricatures, the first especially, would probably find favour in the eyes of King William IV., when in the latter months of his life he made those solitary pilgrimages up St. James's Street to stare in the shop-windows, which so greatly alarmed his household.

When Mr. Spring Rice became Lord Monteagle he retired into private life, for which he was certainly better fitted than for the cares of a great office of the State. He made one effort to emerge from obscurity by attacking Mr. Gladstone's Budget of 1860. The attempt was a failure, though, as Mr. Hayward remarks, 'Mr. Gladstone and his friends naturally spoke with contempt of an attack upon the Budget led by a Whig financier who had been laughed out of the Exchequer; but this did not necessarily invalidate the criticism of Lord Monteagle.' With that effort Spring Rice passed out of the public mind, and during the last few years of his life his name was scarcely heard.]

To the Chancellor of the Exchequer.



IR,—I really think that your celebrated compatriot, Daniel O'Rourke,* when, soaring on the back of an eagle, he entered into a conversation with the man in the moon, could scarcely be more amazed than Mr. Spring Rice must be when he finds himself as Chancellor of the Exchequer, holding a conference with the First Lord of the Treasury. Your colleagues, who, to do them justice, are perpetually apologising for your rapid promotion, account for your rocket-like rise by the unanswerable reason of your being 'a man of business!' I doubt not this is a capital recommendation to those who are not men of business; and indeed, shrewd without being sagacious, bustling without method, loquacious without eloquence, ever prompt though always superficial, and ever active though always blundering, you are exactly the sort of fussy busy-body who would impose upon and render himself indispensable to indolent and ill-informed men of strong ambition and weak minds. Cumberland,† who, in spite of the courtly compliments of his polished Memoirs, could be racy and significant enough in his conversation, once characterised in my presence a countryman of yours as 'a talking potato.' The race of talking potatoes is not extinct.'

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*See the ludicrous story in Crofton Croker's *Fairy Legends and Traditions of the South of Ireland*, edition 1859, pp. 134-144.

†Richard Cumberland, author of the *West Indian*, and the Sir Fretful Plagiary of Sheridan's *Critic*.

Your recent harangue at Cambridge was quite worthy of your reputation, and of those to whom it was addressed.* Full of popular common-places and ministerial propriety, alike the devoted delegate of 'the people' and the trusty servant of the Crown, glorying in your pledges, but reminding your audience that they were voluntary, chuckling in your 'political triumph,'† but impressing on your friends that their 'new power' must not be used for party purposes, I can see you with Irish humour winking your eye on one side of your face as you hazard a sneer at 'the Lords,' and eulogising with solemn hypocrisy with the other half of your countenance our 'blessed constitution.' How choice was the style in which you propounded the future measures of the Cabinet! What heartfelt ejaculations of 'Good God, sir!' mingled with rare jargon about 'hoping and trusting!' You even ventured upon a tawdry simile, borrowed for the occasion from Mr. Sheil,‡ who, compared with his bolder and more lawless colleague, always reminds me of the fustian lieutenant, Jack Bunce, in Sir Walter's tale of the *Pirate,* contrasted with his master, the bloody buccaneer, Captain Cleveland.

You commenced your address with a due recollection of the advice of the great Athenian orator,

*The occasion of this letter was a speech made by Mr. Spring Rice at Cambridge, at a dinner to celebrate the return of Mr. Thomas Hovell, the first Mayor of Cambridge under the Municipal Reform Act, the chief effect of which, as far as Cambridge itself was concerned, was, in Mr. Spring Rice's own words, 'to establish a Liberal domination in the place of a Tory domination.'

†The 'triumph' referred to, on which Mr. Spring Rice laid great stress, was the passage of the Municipal Corporations Act.

‡Richard Lalor Sheil, a prominent advocate of Catholic emancipation, and a Whig placeman from 1839 to his death at Florence, where he held the office of British Minister, in 1851.

for your action was quite striking. You clasped the horny hand of the astonished Mayor, and, full of your punch-bowl orgies, aptly alluded to your 'elevated feelings.'* As for the exquisite raillery in which your graceful fancy indulged about Tory port and Whig sherry, you might perhaps have recollected that if 'old Tory port affects to be a new mixture, is ashamed of its colours, and calls itself Conservative,' that the Whig sherry has disappeared altogether, and that its place has been deleteriously supplied by Irish whisky from an illicit still, and English Blue Ruin. Your profound metaphysics, however, may amply compensate for this infelicitous flash of jocularity. A Senator, and a Minister, and a Cabinet Minister, who gravely informs us that 'the political history of our times has shown us that there is something in human motive that pervades and extends itself to human action,' must have an eye, I suspect, to the representation of the University. This is, indeed, 'a learned Theban.' That human motives have some slight connection with human conduct, is a principle which will, no doubt, figure as an era in metaphysical discovery. The continental imputations of our shallowness in psychological investigation must certainly now be removed for ever. Neither Kant nor Helvetius can enter the arena with our rare Chancellor of the Exchequer. The fall of an apple was sufficient to reveal the secret of celestial mechanics to the musing eye of Newton, but Mr. Spring Rice for his more

*See the speech: 'I grasp that hand with more and more elevated feelings when I view in an old and valued friend the first fruits of the Municipal Reform Bill.' Mr. Hovell, the first Mayor of Cambridge under the Municipal Reform Act, had proposed Mr. Spring Rice at the first general election after the Reform Bill.

abstruse revelations requires a revolution or a Reform Bill. It is 'the political history of our times' that has proved the connection between motives and actions. The Chancellor of the Exchequer must have arrived at this discovery by the recollection of the very dignified and honourable conduct to which the motives of power and place have recently impelled himself and his friends. I cannot help fancying that this display of yours at Cambridge may hereafter be adduced as irrefutable evidence that there is at least one portion of the Irish Protestant population which has not received 'adequate instruction.'*

It seems that you and your Katerfelto crew are going to introduce some very wonderful measures to the notice of the impending Parliament. And, first of all, you are about to 'remedy the still existing grievances to which the great dissenting bodies are subject.' 'Good God! sir,' as you would say, are you driven to this? The still existing grievances of the Dissenters! Do you and your beggarly Cabinet yet live upon these sores? Dissenting grievances are like Stilton cheeses and Damascus sabres, never found in the places themselves, though there is always some bustling huckster or other who will insure you a supply. 'The still existing grievances of the Dissenters,' if they exist at all, exist only because, after four years of incapacity, you and your clumsy coadjutors could not contrive to remove and remedy what Sir Robert Peel could have achieved, but for your faction, in four days.

Then we are to proceed in 'our great work of the reform of the Courts of Equity.' I 'hope and trust'

*The word 'adequate' was used with some superfluity in Mr. Spring Rice's speech.

not. What! after creating the Court of Review, the laughing-stock of the profession; after having at length succeeded in obtaining a second-rate Lord Chancellor* at the expense of four coronets, whose services might have been secured without the waste of one; after having caused more delay, more expense, more mortification and ruin in eight months of reform than the annals of the Court can offer in a similar period in the worst days of its management — still must you amend! Spare us, good sir; be content with your last achievements of law reform; be content with having, by your corporation magistrates, made for the first time in England since the days of Charles II., the administration of justice a matter of party. Will not even this satisfy the Whig lechery for mischief?

Then, 'Ireland must be tranquillised.' So I think. Feed the poor, hang the agitators. That will do it. But that's not your way. It is the destruction of the English and Protestant interest that is the Whig specific for Irish tranquillity. And do you really flatter yourself, because an eccentric course of circumstances has metamorphosed an Irish adventurer† into the Chancellor of the English Exchequer, that the spirited people of this island will allow you to proceed with impunity in your projected machinations? Rest assured, Sir, your career draws rapidly to a close. Providence, that for our sins and the arrogance of our flush prosperity has visited this once great and glorious empire with five years of Whig government, is not implacable. Our God is a God

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*Lord Cottenham.
†Spring Rice himself.

of mercy as well as justice. We may have erred, but we have been chastened. And Athens, when ruled by a Disdar Aga, who was the deputy of the chief of the eunuchs at Constantinople, was not so contemptible as England governed by a Limerick lawyer—the deputy of an Irish rebel!

Prepare, then, for your speedy and merited dismissal. It is amusing to fancy what may be the resources of your Cabinet in their permanent retirement. The First Lord of the Treasury, in all probability, will betake himself to Brocket, and compose an epilogue for the drama just closed. Your Lord Chancellor may retire to his native village, like a returned cheese. Lord John, perhaps, will take down his dusty lyre, and console us for having starved Coleridge by pouring forth a monody to his memory. As for the polished Palmerston and the pious Grant, and the other trading statesmen of easy virtue—for them it would be advisable, I think, at once to erect a political Magdalen Hospital. Solitude and spare diet, and some salutary treatises on the English constitution, may, after a considerable interval, capacitate them for re-entering public life, and even filling with an approximation to obscure respectability some of the lower offices of the State. But, Sir, for yourself, with your 'business-like talents,' which must not be hid under a bushel, it appears to me that it would be both the wisest and the kindest course to entrust to your charge and instruction a class of beings who, in their accomplishments and indefatigableness, alike in their physical and moral qualities, not a little resemble you—the INDUSTRIOUS FLEAS.

January 28, 1836.

LETTER VII.

TO

LORD JOHN RUSSELL

JANUARY 30, 1836

LETTER VII.

[The line of action adopted by Lord John Russell throughout the intrigue which ended in the retirement of Lord Grey from the Reform Ministry was very generally condemned. He occupied in the administration of Earl Grey the position of Paymaster of the Forces, notoriously rather because of his staunchness to the principles of Liberalism than on account of any affection entertained for him by his chief. The latter did not, indeed, conceal his sentiments in society. Russell retaliated in characteristic fashion by asserting a species of independence which no Minister in the position of Lord Grey could tolerate without a serious loss of dignity and self-respect. Dissensions consequently broke out in the Ministry, and when the Irish Church Establishment was attacked in 1834, Lord John Russell made a speech on the Appropriation Bill which drew from Sheil the remark that 'Johnny' had upset the coach. This was on May 6; and then came the memorable split when the Duke of Richmond, Postmaster-General, Lord Ripon, Privy Seal, Mr. Stanley, Cabinet Secretary, and Sir James Graham, First Lord of the Admiralty, seceded. They were followed in their respective offices by the Marquis of Conyngham, the Earl of Carlisle, Lord Auckland, and Mr. Spring Rice. The secret of the whole business was as usual an Irish intrigue. The Catholics spared no effort to secure a provision for their clergy out of the funds of the Irish Church. Sheil was put up to ask the question which drew Lord John so effectively, and afterwards took great credit to himself for having, as he said, 'sown the seeds of salutary discord.' The strife was ended by the resignation of Lord Althorp, which in its turn was succeeded by that of Lord Grey. Lord Melbourne's feeble first administration, which came to an end through the direct action of the King in the following November, succeeded. He returned to office in April, 1835, with Lord John Russell as Home

Secretary. 'Runnymede's' letter is a personal attack, based in the main upon the intrigues of July, 1834. Lord Beaconsfield's aversion for Lord John Russell was in the early part of his life somewhat pronounced; nor is the fact a matter for surprise, seeing that he regarded him as the type and essence of Whiggism, for the principles of which he always entertained the greatest antagonism. His feeling towards the noble Lord may be best appreciated from a sentence or two from a speech delivered in 1840, on Sir John Yarde Buller's motion of want of confidence in the Melbourne Government. 'The time would come,' he said on that occasion, 'when the Chartists would discover that in a country so aristocratic as England, even treason to be successful must be patrician. They would discover that great truth, and when they found some desperate noble to lead them, they might, perhaps, achieve greater results. When Wat Tyler failed, Henry Bolingbroke changed a dynasty; and although Jack Straw was hanged, a Lord John Straw might become a Secretary of State.' Time modified the severity of these judgments. Earl Russell died during the administration of Lord Beaconsfield (May 28, 1878). Lord Beaconsfield did not 'miss his train,' as happened to another great statesman on a somewhat similar occasion, but promptly offered a public funeral in Westminster Abbey, and on the first available opportunity paid due tribute to the 'eminent career' of the noble Earl in the only fitting place — the House of Lords.]

To Lord John Russell.

MY LORD,— Your name will descend to posterity — you have burnt your Ephesian temple. But great deeds are not always achieved by great men. Your character is a curious one; events have proved that it has been imperfectly comprehended, even by your own party. Long and, for a period, intimate opportunities of observing you will enable me, if I mistake not, to enter into its just analysis.

You were born with a strong ambition and a feeble intellect. It is an union not uncommon, and in the majority of cases only tends to convert an aspiring youth into a querulous and discontented manhood. But under some circumstances — when combined, for instance, with great station, and consequent opportunities of action — it is an union which often leads to the development of a peculiar talent — the talent of political mischief.

When you returned from Spain, the solitary life of travel and the inspiration of a romantic country, acting upon your ambition, had persuaded you that you were a great poet; your intellect, in consequence, produced the feeblest tragedy in our language. The reception of 'Don Carlos' only convinced your ambition that your imaginative powers had been improperly directed. Your ambition sought from prose-fiction the fame which had been denied to your lyre; and your intellect in consequence produced the feeblest romance in our literature.* Not deterred by the unhappy catastrophe of the fair maid of Arrouca, your ambitions sought consolation in the notoriety of political literature, and your intellect in due time produced the feeblest political essay on record.† Your defence of close boroughs, however, made this volume somewhat popular with the Whigs, and, flushed with the compliments of Holland House, where hitherto you had been treated with more affection than respect, your ambition resolved on rivalling the fame of Hume and Gibbon. Your *Memoirs of the*

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* *The Nun of Arrouca.* A Tale by Lord John Russell. London, 1822. 12mo.

† *The Causes of the French Revolution.* By Lord John Russell. London, 1832, 8vo.

Affairs of Europe, published with pompous parade in successive quarto volumes, retailed in frigid sentences a feeble compilation from the gossip of those pocket tomes of small-talk which abound in French literature. Busied with the tattle of valets and waiting-maids, you accidentally omitted in your *Memoirs of the Affairs of Europe* all notice of its most vast and most rising empire. This luckless production closed your literary career; you flung down your futile pen in incapable despair; and your feeble intellect having failed in literature, your strong ambition took refuge in politics.

You had entered the House of Commons with every adventitious advantage — an illustrious birth, and the support of an ancient and haughty party. I was one of the audience who assisted at your first appearance, and I remember the cheering attention that was extended to you. Cold, inanimate, with a weak voice and a mincing manner, the failure of your intellect was complete; but your ambition wrestled for a time with the indifference of your opponents and the ill-concealed contempt of your friends.

Having, then, failed alike in both these careers which in this still free country are open to genius, you subsided for some years into a state of listless moroseness which was even pitiable. Hitherto your political opinions had been mild and moderate, and, if partial, at least constitutional; but, as is ever the case with persons of your temperament, despairing of yourself, you began to despair of your country. This was the period when among your intimates you talked of retiring from that public life in which you had not succeeded in making yourself public, when you paced, like a feeble Catiline, the avenues of Hol-

land House; and when the most brilliant poet* of the day, flattered by your friendship, addressed you a remonstrance in which your pique figured as patriotism and your ambition was elevated into genius.

Your friends,—I speak of the circle in which you lived†—superficial judges of human character as well as of everything else, always treated you with a species of contempt, which doubtless originated in their remembrance of your failure and their conviction of your feebleness. Lord Grey, only five years ago, would not even condescend to offer you a seat in the Cabinet, and affected to state that, in according you a respectable office, he had been as much influenced by the state of your finances as of your capacity. Virtual Prime Minister of England at this moment, you have repaid Lord Grey for his flattering estimate and his friendly services, and have afforded him, in your present career, some curious meditations for his uneasy solitude, where he wanders, like the dethroned Caliph in the halls of Eblis, with his quivering hand pressed upon his aching heart.

A finer observer of human nature than that forlorn statesman might have recognised at this crisis, in a noble with a historic name and no fortune, a vast ambition and a balked career, and soured, not to say malignant, from disappointment, some prime materials for the leader of a revolutionary faction. Those materials have worked well. You have already banished your great leader; you have struck down the solemn idol which you yourself assisted in setting up for the worship of a deluded people; you have exiled

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*Moore, *Poetical Works*, Ed. 1850, p. 458.
†*i.e.* the Holland House coterie.

from the Cabinet, by your dark and dishonourable intrigues, every man of talent who could have held you in check; and, placing in the seat of nominal leadership an indolent epicurean,* you rule this country by a coalition with an Irish rebel,† and with a council of colleagues in which you have united the most inefficient members of your own party with the Palmerstons and Grants, the Swiss statesmen, the *condottieri* of the political world, the 'British legion' of public life.

A miniature Mokanna,‡ you are now exhaling upon the constitution of your country which you once eulogised, and its great fortunes of which you once were proud, all that long-hoarded venom and all those distempered humours that have for years accumulated in your petty heart and tainted the current of your mortified life — your aim is to reduce everything to your own mean level — to degrade everything to your malignant standard. Partially you have succeeded. You have revenged yourself upon the House of Lords, the only obstacle to your degenerating schemes, by denouncing, with a frigid conceit worthy of 'Don Carlos,' its solemn suffrage as 'the whisper of a faction,' and hallooing on, in a flimsy treble, your Scotch and Irish desperadoes to assail its august independence. You have revenged yourself upon the sovereign who recoiled from your touch, by kissing, in spite of his royal soul, his outraged hand.

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*Melbourne. Mr. Hayward's Essay in the *Quarterly Review* of January, 1878, proves how fully this character was deserved.

†O'Connell.

‡*See* Moore's *Veiled Prophet of Khorassan.* The name was given by Hakim ben Haschem from a silver gauze veil worn by him to 'dim the lustre of his face,' or rather to hide its ugliness. The story is told by D'Herbelot in the *Bibliothèque Orientale.*

from the Cabinet, by your dark and dishonourable intrigues, every man of talent who could have held you in check; and placing in the seat of nominal leadership an insolent epicurean,* you rule this country by a coalition with an Irish rebel,† and with a council of colleagues in which you have united the most inefficient members of your own party with the Palmerstons and Grants, the Swiss statesmen, the *condottieri* of the political world, the 'British legion' of public life.

A miniature Mokanna,‡ you are now exhaling upon the constitution of your country which you once eulogised, and its great fortunes of which you once were [illegible] and all those disinterested honours that have for years accompanied [illegible] of your manhood, [illegible] is to reduce everything to your own level, to degrade everything to your malignant standard. Partially you have succeeded. You have revenged yourself upon the House of Lords, the only obstacle to your degenerating schemes, by denouncing, with a frigid conceit worthy of 'Don Carlos,' its solemn suffrage as 'the whisper of a faction,' and hallooing on, in a flimsy treble, your Scotch and Irish desperadoes to assail its august independence. You have revenged yourself upon the sovereign who recoiled from your touch, by kissing, in spite of his royal soul, his outraged hand.

PORTRAIT OF LORD JOHN RUSSELL.

From a photograph of the Original Painting in the National Gallery.

(See page 74, *The Runnymede Letters.*)

* Melbourne. Mr. Hayward's Essay in the *Quarterly Review* of January, 1856, proves how fully the character was deserved.

† O'Connell.

‡ See Moore's *Lalla Rookh* of Khorassan. The name was given by Hafiz ben Hankem from a silver grave veil worn by him to 'shut the beams of his face,' or rather to hide its ugliness. The story is told by D'Herbelot in the *Bibliothèque Orientale*.

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Notwithstanding your base powers and your father's fagot votes, the gentlemen of England inflicted upon you an indelible brand, and expelled you from your own county;* and you have revenged yourself upon their indignant patriotism by depriving them of their noblest and most useful privileges, and making, for the first time since the reign of Charles II., the administration of justice the business of faction. In all your conduct it is not difficult to detect the workings of a mean and long-mortified spirit suddenly invested with power — the struggles of a strong ambition attempting, by a wanton exercise of authority, to revenge the disgrace of a feeble intellect.

But, my Lord, rest assured that yours is a mind which, if it succeeded in originating, is not destined to direct, a revolution. Whatever may be the issue of the great struggle now carrying on in this country, whether we may be permitted to be again great, glorious, and free, or whether we be doomed to sink beneath the ignoble tyranny which your machinations are preparing for us, your part in the mighty drama must soon close. To suppose that, with all your efforts and all your desperation, to suppose that, with all the struggles of your ambition to supply the deficiency of your intellect, your Lordship, in those heroic hours when empires are destroyed or saved, is fated to be anything else than an instrument is to suppose that which contradicts all the records of history and all our experience of human nature.

I think it is Macrobius who tells a story of a young Greek, who, having heard much of the wealth

* Lord John Russell sat for South Devon in the first reformed Parliament, but being defeated there at the next election was compelled to take refuge at Stroud.

and wisdom of Egypt, determined on visiting that celebrated land. When he beheld the pyramids of Memphis and the gates of Thebes, he exclaimed, 'O wonderful men! what must be your gods!' Full of the memory of the glorious divinities of his own poetic land, the blooming Apollo and the bright Diana, the awful beauty of the Olympian Jove and the sublime grace of the blue-eyed Athene, he entered the temples of the Pharaohs. But what was his mingled astonishment and disgust when he found a nation prostrate before the most contemptible and the most odious of created beings! The gods of Egypt are the ministers of England.

I can picture to myself an intelligent foreigner, attracted by the fame of our country, and visiting it for the first time. I can picture to myself his admiration when he beholds our great public works; our roads, our docks, our canals; our unrivalled manufactories, our matchless agriculture. That admiration would not be diminished when he learnt that we were free; when he became acquainted with our social comfort and our still equal laws. 'O! wonderful men,' he would exclaim, 'what must be your governors!' But conceive him now, entered into our political temple; conceive his appalled astonishment as he gazes on the ox-like form of the Lansdowne Apis. On one side he beholds an altar raised to an ape, on the other incense is burned before a cat-like colleague. Here, placed in the shapes of Palmerston and Grant, the worship of two sleek and long-tailed rats; and then learns, with amazement, that the Lord Chancellor of this great land is an onion or a cheese. Towering above all, and resting on a lurid shrine bedewed with blood and encircled with flame, with distended jaws

and colossal tail, is the grim figure of the O'Connell crocodile. But, my Lord, how thunderstruck must be our visitor when he is told to recognise a Secretary of State in an infinitely small scarabæus;—yes, my Lord, when he learns that you are the leader of the English House of Commons, our traveller may begin to comprehend how the Egyptians worshipped—AN INSECT.

January 30, 1836.

LETTER VIII.

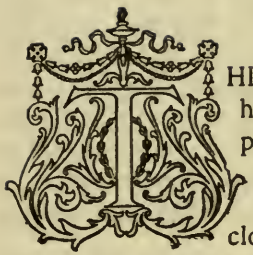
TO

THE PEOPLE

February 2, 1836

LETTER VIII.

To the People.



HIS is the first direct address that has ever been made to the real people of England. For the last few years, a gang of scribblers, in the pay of a desperate faction, have cloaked every incendiary appeal that they have vomited forth to any section of your numbers, however slight, or however opposed to the honour and happiness of the nation, by elevating the object of their solicitude into that imposing aggregate, the people. Thus have they played, for their ulterior purposes, dissenting sects against the National Church, manufacturing towns against agricultural districts, the House of Commons against the House of Lords, new burgesses against ancient freemen, and finally, the Papists against the Protestants. With scarcely an exception, you may invariably observe, that in advocating the cause of 'the people' these writers have ever stimulated the anti-national passions of the minority. But, in addressing you now, I address myself in very truth to the English people—to all orders and conditions of men that form that vast society, from the merchant to the mechanic, and from the peer to the peasant.

You are still a great people. You are still in the possession and enjoyment of the great results of civilisation, in spite of those who would destroy your internal prosperity. Your flag still floats triumphant in every division of the globe, in spite of the menaces of dismemberment that threaten your empire from every quarter. Neither domestic nor foreign agitation has yet succeeded in uprooting your supremacy. But how long this imperial integrity may subsist, when it is the object of a faction in your own land to array great classes of your population in hostile collision, and when, from the Castle of Dublin to the Castle of Quebec, your honour is tampered with by the deputies of your sovereign, is a question which well deserves your quick and earnest consideration.

In the mesh of unparalleled difficulties in which your affairs are now entangled, who are your guides? Are they men in whose wisdom and experience, in whose virtue and talents, principle and resolution, in whose acknowledged authority and unblemished honour, and deserved celebrity, you are justified in reposing your hopes and entrusting your confidence? Lucian once amused the ancients with an auction of their gods. Let us see what Mr. George Robins might think of an auction of your Ministers. The catalogue may soon be run over.

A Prime Minister in an easy-chair, reading a French novel. What think you of that lot? Three Secretaries of State, one odious, another contemptible, the third both.* They have their price, yet I would

*Palmerston, Foreign Secretary; Glenelg, Colonial Secretary; and Russell, Home Secretary.

not be their purchaser. A new Lord Chancellor * like a new cheese, crude and flavourless: second-rate as a lawyer, as a statesman a nonentity, bought in by his own party from sheer necessity. A President of the India Board,† recovering from the silence of years imposed upon him by Canning, by the inspiration of that eloquent man's chair which he now fills. As we are still a naval nation, our First Lord of the Admiralty should be worth something; but unfortunately, nobody knows his name.‡ The President of the Council§ has always indicated a tendency to join any Government, and therefore should be a marketable article enough. In Egypt, where their favourite food are pumpkins that have run to seed, such a solid and mature intelligence might be worth exporting to the Divan. The Chancellor of the Exchequer,‖ being 'a man of business,' would doubtless fetch 'a long figure;' refer for character to the mercantile deputations who leave the Treasury after an interview, bursting with laughter from sheer admiration of his knowledge and capacity. Lord Howick,¶ who is a Minister on the same principle that the son of an old partner is retained in the firm to keep together the connection, might command a price on this score, were it not notorious that his parent has withdrawn with his person, his capital, and confidence. The remainder may be thrown into one lot, and the auction concluded with the item on the Dutch system.

Were the destinies of a great people ever yet en-

* Pepys, Lord Cottenham.
† Sir John Cam Hobhouse.
‡ Lord Minto.
§ Marquis of Lansdowne.
‖ Spring Rice.
¶ The present Earl Grey succeeded his father in July, 1845.

trusted to such a grotesque and Hudibrastic crew? Why, we want no candid confessions or triumphant revelations from Mr. Sheil; we want no audacious apostacy of a whole party to teach us how such a truckling rout governs England. They govern England as the mock dynasties governed Europe in the time of the Revolution, by a process as sure and as simple, as desperate and as degrading, by being the delegates of an anti-national power. And what is this power beneath whose sirocco breath the fame of England is fast withering? Were it the dominion of another conqueror, another bold bastard with his belted sword, we might gnaw the fetter which we could not burst; were it the genius of Napoleon with which we were again struggling, we might trust the issue to the God of battles with a sainted confidence in our good cause and our national energies: but we are sinking beneath a power before which the proudest conquerors have grown pale, and by which the nations most devoted to freedom have become enslaved, the power of a foreign priesthood.

The Pope may be an old man, or an old woman, once the case, but the Papacy is independent of the Pope. The insignificance of the Pope is adduced by your enemies as evidence of the insignificance of the Papacy. 'Tis the fatal fallacy by which they mean to ride roughshod over England. Is the Pope less regarded now than when Bourbon sacked Rome? Yet that exploit preceded the massacre of St. Bartholomew and the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. The Constable of Bourbon lived before Sir Phelim O'Neale. The Papacy is as rampant now in Ireland as it was in Europe in the time of Gregory; and all its energies *are* directed to your humiliation.

Who is this man whose name is ever on your lips? Who is this O'Connell? He is the salaried advocate of the Irish priesthood; he is the hired instrument of the Papacy. That is his precise position. Your enemies, that wretched anti-national faction who wish to retain power, or creep into place, by clinging to the skirts of this foreign rebel, taunt those who would expose his destructive arts and unmask the purpose of his desperate principals with the wretched scoff, that we make him of importance by our notice. He cannot be of more importance than he is. Demoralised in character, desperate in fortunes, infinitely over-estimated in talents, he is the most powerful individual in the world because he is entrusted with the delegated influence of the greatest power in existence. But because an individual exercises a great power, it does not follow that he is a great man. O'Connell is not as yet as great as Robespierre, although he resembles that terrific agitator in everything except his disinterestedness. Robespierre presided over public safety as O'Connell over reform. A precious foster-dam! Would it have been any answer to those who would have struggled against the great insurer of public security, that his intended victims made him of importance by their notice? Would it have been endured that these deprecators of resistance should have urged, 'He is not a Cæsar, he is not an Alexander, he has no amplitude of mind, he is not a great genius; let him go on murdering, you make him of importance by noticing his career of blood and havoc!'

This man, O'Connell, is the hired instrument of the Papacy; as such, his mission is to destroy your Protestant society, and, as such, he is a more terrible

enemy to England than Napoleon, with all his inspiration. Your empire and your liberties are in more danger at this moment than when the army of invasion was encamped at Boulogne.

Now we have a precise idea of the political character of O'Connell. And I have often marvelled when I have listened to those who have denounced his hypocrisy or admired his skill, when they have read of the triumphant demagogue humbling himself in the mud before a simple priest. There was no hypocrisy in this, no craft. The agent recognised his principal, the slave bowed before his lord; and when he pressed to his lips those sacred robes, reeking with whisky and redolent of incense, I doubt not that his soul was filled at the same time with unaffected awe and devout gratitude.

If we have correctly fixed his political character, let us see whether we can as accurately estimate his intellectual capacity and his moral qualities. The hired writers would persuade you that he is a great man. He has not a single quality of a great man. In proportion as he was so gifted, he would be less fitted for the part which he has to perform. There is a sublime sentiment in genius, even when uncontrolled by principle, that would make it recoil with nausea from what this man has to undergo. He is shrewd, vigorous, versatile; with great knowledge of character, little of human nature; with that reckless dexterity which confounds weak minds, and that superficial readiness that masters vulgar passions; energetic from the certainty of his own desperate means, and from the strong stimulus of his provisional remuneration; inexhaustible in unprincipled expedients, and audacious in irresponsible power; a *nisi prius* lawyer,

with the soul of a demagogue. That is the man. He is as little a great orator as a great man. He has not a single quality of a great orator except a good voice. I defy his creatures to produce a single passage from any speech he ever delivered illumined by a single flash of genius, or tinctured with the slightest evidence of taste, or thought, or study. Learning he has none; little reading. His style in speaking, as in writing, is ragged, bald, halting, disjointed. He has no wit, though he may claim his fair portion of that Milesian humour which every one inherits who bears a hod. His pathos is the stage sentiment of a barn; his invective is slang. When he aspires to the higher style of rhetoric, he is even ludicrous. He snatches up a bit of tinsel, a tawdry riband, or an artificial flower, and mixes it with his sinewy commonplace and his habitual soot, like a chimney-sweeper on May-day.

Of his moral character it might be enough to say, that he is a systematic liar and a beggarly cheat, a swindler and a poltroon. But of O'Connell you can even say more. His public and his private life are equally profligate; he has committed every crime that does not require courage: the man who plunders the peasant can also starve his child.* He has denounced your national character and insulted your national honour. He has said that all your men are cowards and all your women wantons. He has reviled your illustrious princes — he has sneered at your pure religion — he has assailed your National Church. He has endeavoured to stir up rebellion against your

*There was much meaning in this denunciation. See T. Campbell-Foster's *Letters on the Condition of the People of Ireland*, 1846.

august Senate, and has described your House of Commons, even when reformed, as an assembly of 'six hundred scoundrels.' Everything which is established comes under his ban, because everything which is established is an obstacle to the purpose for which he is paid — the destruction of everything which is ENGLISH.

February 2, 1836.

LETTER IX.

TO

LORD STANLEY

FEBRUARY 6, 1836

LETTER IX.

[Lord Stanley (afterwards Lord Derby), having retired from the Ministry of Earl Grey when that Government went to pieces on the question of redistributing the property of the Irish Church, speedily took up an attitude of direct hostility to his former colleagues and allied himself with Peel, sitting with him on the front Opposition bench during the second Melbourne administration. He, however, refused office under Sir Robert Peel.]

To Lord Stanley.

MY LORD,—The classical historian of our country* said of your great ancestor that 'the Countess of Derby had the glory of being the *last* person in the three kingdoms, and in all their dependent dominions, who submitted to the victorious rebels.' Charlotte de la Trémouille† was a woman who might have shamed the degenerate men of the present day; but your Lordship may claim, with a slight though significant alteration, the eulogium of that illustrious princess. The rebels are again victorious, and to

* Hume.

† Countess of Derby, who stood the sieges of Lathom House by Fairfax in 1644-5.

your Lordship's lasting honour, you have been the *first* to resist their treasonable authority.

Never has a statesman yet been placed in a position so difficult and so trying as the present heir of the house of Derby; never has a statesman under similar circumstances yet conducted himself with more discretion and more courage. When the acerbities of faction have passed away, posterity will do justice to your disinterestedness and devotion, and the future historian of England will record with sympathising admiration the greatness of your sacrifice.

If the gratification of your ambition had been your only object, your course was clear. Less than three years ago the Whigs, and loudest among them my Lord Melbourne, announced you as the future Prime Minister of England. Young, of high lineage, of illustrious station, and of immaculate character, and unquestionably their ablest orator—among your own party you had no rival. They looked upon you as the only man who could at the same time maintain their power and effectually resist the machinations of those who would equally destroy the constitution and dismember the empire. With what enthusiastic cheers did they not greet the winged words with which you assailed the anti-national enemy when you rose in the House like a young eagle, and dashed back his treason in the baffled countenance of the priestly delegate!

Who could believe that the same men who cheered you in the House, and chuckled over your triumphs in their coteries, should now be the truckling slaves of the sacerdotal power from whose dark influence they then shrank with disgust and terror? Who could believe that the projected treason of these very

men should have driven you and your high-minded colleagues from the contagion of their councils? Who could believe that the famous 'Reform Ministry' that packed a Parliament by bellowing 'gratitude to Lord Grey' throughout the empire should finally have expelled that same Lord Grey from his seat, under circumstances of revolting insult; that the very Lord Melbourne who had always indicated yourself as Lord Grey's successor, should himself have slid into that now sullied seat, where he maintains himself in indolent dependence by a foul alliance with the very man whom he had previously denounced as a traitor? Can the records of public life, can the secret archives of private profligacy, afford a parallel instance of conduct so base, so completely degrading, so thoroughly demoralised?

You, my Lord, preferred your honour to your interest, the prosperity of your native land to the gratification of your ambition. You sacrificed without a pang the proudest station in your country, to prove to your countrymen that public principle was not yet a jest. You did well. The pulse of our national character was beating low. We required some great example to rebrace the energies of our honour. From the moment that you denounced this disgusting thraldom and the base expedients of your chicaning colleagues, a better feeling pervaded England and animated Englishmen. In this sharp exigency you did not forget your duty to yourself as well as to your country. Yours was no Coriolanus part; neither the taunts of the recent supporters who had betrayed you, nor the ready compliments of your former adversaries, tempted you to swerve for a moment from the onward path of a severe and peremptory prin-

ciple. When Sir Robert Peel was summoned to the helm, in the autumn of 1834, your position was indeed most painful. Your honour and your duty seemed at conflict. You reconciled them. You supported the policy while you declined the power.

These, my Lord, are great deeds. They will live. The defence of Lathom was not more heroic. They will live in the admiration and the gratitude of an ancient and honourable nation, ever ready to sympathise with the pure and noble, and prompt to recognise a natural leader in blood that is mingled with all the traditionary glories of their race.

You had now placed your character above suspicion. The most virulent of the hired writers of the faction did not dare to impugn the purity of your motives. You had satisfied the most morbid claims of an honour which the worldly only might deem too chivalrous. When, therefore, I find you at length avowedly united with that eminent man on whom the hopes of his country rest with a deserving and discerning confidence, and who, in his parliamentary talents, his proud station, and his unsullied fame, is worthy of your alliance, I was rejoiced, but not surprised. It is a fit season to 'stand together in your chivalry.' The time is ripe for union and fair for concord. When, some days back, in my letter to Sir Robert Peel — a letter, let me observe in passing, written by one whose name, in spite of the audacious license of frantic conjecture, has never yet been even intimated, can never be discovered, and will never be revealed — I announced the fact that the great Conservative party was at length completely united, it was a declaration equivalent to England being saved. The debates upon the address have proved the accuracy of my

information. The hired writers and the place-hunting dependents of the priestly junta triumph over the division in the Commons; they might have read their knell in the voice of the tellers. They assure us, with solemn or with sparkling countenance, that they did not reckon upon a moiety of such a majority. And do they indeed think that the people of England care one jot whether there be ten or twenty traitors more or less in the House of Commons? It is not a miserable majority in that assembly, either way, that will destroy or preserve the empire. That very debate, my Lord, over the result of which these short-sighted desperadoes affect to triumph, sealed the doom of the faction and announced the salvation of the country. It will fill every loyal and discerning heart throughout England with more than hope. Whatever the hired writers and the expectant runners may bawl or scribble, that division numbered the days of the present Cabinet. And they know it. The sacerdotal delegates know full well that the moment the Conservatives are united, the priestly plot is baffled.

When the First Lord of the Treasury was reinstalled in the office which he won by so patriotic a process, and which he fills with such diligent ability, shrinking from the contamination of O'Connell, the very mention of whose name in his private circle makes him even now tremble with compunctious rage, he declared that affairs might be carried on without the 'victorious rebels,' from the mere disunion of the Conservative camp. No one was more completely aware than his Lordship that the moment that disunion ceased, his authority must tremble. To perpetuate distrust, and to excite division among the

different sections of the Conservative party, all the energies of the anti-English cabal have of late been directed. The Municipal Bill filled them with a fluttering hope; a severance between the Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel was announced as inevitable. To-day a great commoner and a learned lord no longer meet; to-morrow the appropriation clause is to be got rid of by some new juggle, and your Lordship and your fellow-leaders are to return to the tainted benches of the Treasury. Now the conferences at Drayton hang fire; their midnight visits from illustrious Princes bode splits and schisms. We have scarcely recovered from the effect of a suspicious dinner, when our attention is promptly directed to a mysterious call. The debates on the address have laid for ever these restless spectres of the disordered imagination of a daunted yet desperate faction. In a Peel, a Stanley, a Wellington, and a Lyndhurst, the people of England recognise their fitting leaders. Let the priestly party oppose to these the acrid feebleness of a Russell and the puerile commonplace of a Howick, Melbourne's experienced energy, and Lansdowne's lucid perception!

February 6, 1836.

LETTER X.

TO

LORD WILLIAM BENTINCK

FEBRUARY 11, 1836

LETTER X.

[Lord William Bentinck had a somewhat singular career. He was next brother to the Duke of Portland, but preferred an active life to one of inglorious ease, and was consequently kept in pretty constant employment by successive Governments. He was only seventeen when he obtained a commission in the Coldstream Guards, and at five-and-twenty he was entrusted with special duties at the headquarters of Suwarow's army in Italy. In 1803, he being then of the mature age of twenty-eight, was selected to assume the Lieutenant-Governorship of Madras—a post which he held for five years. On his return he joined the army in Spain, but was speedily sent on a diplomatic mission to the Junta in Portugal. Superseded after some months by Mr. Frere who went out as Minister Plenipotentiary, he again went on active service and commanded a brigade under Sir John Moore at Coruña. Raised to the rank of general of division, he served next under Sir Arthur Wellesley, but was speedily detached from active service to assume the functions of diplomacy. His title was 'Minister Plenipotentiary' of England at the Court of Naples, but to the functions implied in those words were added the duties of commander-in-chief of the Neapolitan forces. In that capacity he did not succeed in making himself especially popular. Queen Caroline quarrelled with him and hurried off to Vienna, where she actually entered into negotiations with Napoleon with the object of inducing that avowed enemy of her husband and herself to send an expedition to expel the English from Sicily. Napoleon's hands were full, however, and the English remained until the peace. Lord William succeeded in inducing Ferdinand to grant a constitution to his subjects on the purest principles of Liberalism; and when after an erratic military expedition to Catalonia, which ended in the disaster of Villa Franca, he returned to Naples, he found that the work in which he had been engaged had to be done over

again. In 1814 he went to Leghorn to stir up the people of Tuscany to shake off the French yoke, and secured from Ferdinand a solemn promise to respect the constitution to which he had sworn. How Ferdinand kept his oath, the 100,000 Neapolitans who perished by violence in the following thirty years bear witness.

True to the traditions of his party, Lord William Bentinck had tried to turn Sicily into a protected State after the fashion adopted with regard to the Ionian Islands in 1815. In the same way he endeavoured to reconstitute the ancient republic of Genoa. In both cases his action was disavowed by the home authorities, but in spite of all he was sent as British Resident to Rome. He sat for a short time in Parliament for King's Lynn, where he failed to make any conspicuous figure, and in 1827 he was chosen by Mr. Canning as Governor-General of India. His administration was rendered memorable by one great achievement. In 1829 he succeeded in inducing his Council to declare the illegality of the practice of 'Suttee' (according to which Hindoo widows were burned to death when their husbands died). He returned to England four years later, ostensibly on the ground of ill-health, but really because the Government at home wished to promote one of their own men, which was done by giving the Governor-Generalship to Lord Auckland. He left a magnificent reputation in India, and a column was erected to his memory in Calcutta, for which Macaulay wrote the inscription. It states amongst other things that, 'during seven years he ruled India with eminent prudence, integrity, and benevolence,' that he 'never laid aside the simplicity and moderation of a private citizen,' that he 'gave liberty to the expression of public opinion,' and 'effaced humiliating distinctions.' He was not, however, quite so popular at home. Greville says of him—and the same thing may be found elsewhere—that 'his success in life was greater than his talents warranted, for he was not right-headed, and committed some great blunder or other in every public situation in which he was placed.' The Glasgow address was almost universally condemned. Greville, himself a Whig, and a relative of Lord William, plainly speaks of it as 'silly,' and the world at large was a little startled to find a man of high rank and great wealth openly advocating revolutionary change. It answered its purpose, however, and Lord William Bentinck was member for Glasgow until a few days before his death, on June 17, 1839.]

To Lord William Bentinck.

MY LORD,— I have just read your Lordship's Address to the Electors of the City of Glasgow; and, when I remember that the author of this production has been entrusted for no inconsiderable period with the government of 100,000,000 of human beings, I tremble. I say not this with reference to the measures of which you have there announced yourself the advocate, but to the manner in which that announcement is expressed. It implies, in my opinion, at the same time, a want of honesty and a want of sense.

This Address to the Electors of the City of Glasgow is made by an individual who has been employed for more than a quarter of a century by his sovereign in foreign service of the utmost importance, ascending, at last, even to the Viceregal throne of India; he is a member of a family of the highest rank and consideration; and some very persevering paragraphs in the Government journals have of late sedulously indicated him as a fit and future member of Lord Melbourne's Cabinet. Your Lordship, therefore, is a very considerable personage; the public are familiar with your name, if not with your career; they are instructed to believe you an individual of great mark and likelihood, of great promise as well as of great performance; as one who is not unwilling to devote to their interests at home all those talents which have been so long exercised, and all that experience which has been so laboriously obtained, in their service in other and distant lands. 'Tis distance

lends enchantment to the view, sings a bard* of that city which your Lordship is to represent: 'tis distance which has invested your Lordship with the haze of celebrity; but I doubt whether the shadowy illusion will be long proof against that nearer inspection and more familiar experience of your judgment and capacity, which your Lordship has favoured us with in your Address to the Electors of the City of Glasgow.†

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*Campbell.

†The following is the address alluded to:—

To the Electors of the City of Glasgow.

Gentlemen,—It is only in consequence of the very numerous requisitions which I have had the honour to receive, that I could have ventured to aspire to the high distinction of representing you in Parliament. Encouraged by this invitation, I shall at once proceed to state, frankly and explicitly, my opinion upon the various topics and measures that are likely to be brought before Parliament in the ensuing session, with a confident hope that in this exposition nothing will be found at variance with those principles which for many years of my life I have professed and practised; and upon which alone, and to no particular competency of my own, I can found a claim to your suffrages.

Permit me, then, in the outset, to give my adherence to the now happily established conviction among all reformers, that by firm union, by the abandonment of all separate and minor views, and by a steady support of Lord Melbourne's Ministry, the present and future cause of reform can alone be supported.

With respect to expected measures, I should decidedly support the ministerial plan of Irish Church Reform, imperfect and insufficient as I must consider the measure to be.

I, of course, am a decided friend to a complete reform of the Irish Municipal Corporations.

I am favourable to the shortening of the duration of Parliaments: but without having had occasion seriously to consider this subject, I should prefer, as a present measure, the quinquennial to the triennial term.

With respect to the extension of the suffrage, into the details of which I have never entered, I can only generally state my firm belief that the broader the admission of all the intelligent classes to the gov-

There are some, indeed, who affirm — and those, too, persons of no mean authority — that this address may even be considered a manifesto of the least constitutional portion of the Cabinet to whom your Lordship and my Lord Durham are speedily to afford all the weight of your influence and all the advantage of your wisdom. How this may be, events will prove; the effusion is certainly sufficiently marked by the great characteristic of the Whig-Radical school; a reckless readiness to adopt measures, of the details and consequences of which they are obviously, and often avowedly ignorant.

The address itself consists of twelve paragraphs. In the first your Lordship informs us that you come

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ernment of the country, the greater will be the security of our existing institutions.

I am opposed to the vote by ballot; I consider it a complete illusion. It will not destroy the exercise of undue influence, but it will give rise to another influence still more pernicious — that of money and corruption, against which there is no security but in publicity. At the same time, as the vote by ballot affects no existing right, I would willingly acquiesce in the general wishes of my constituents to vote for it as an experimental and temporary measure.

I am profoundly penetrated with the indispensable necessity that the two branches of the Legislature should be brought into harmony with each other; and I am of opinion that the result may be advantageously accomplished through the constitutional exercise of the prerogative of the Crown without any organic change.

I need not promise my support to all measures regarding freedom of trade, and economy and retrenchment in every department of the State, consistently, of course, with efficiency and safety. The Corn Laws are a difficult question. I am for their abolition. If railways, as I believe, may become necessary in the race of competition that we have to run with other countries, the prices of subsistence must in a still greater degree contribute to success. I should hope that an equitable compromise between the agricultural and manufacturing interests might not be found impracticable.

I shall advert, in the last place, to the application for a grant of 10,000*l.* towards the endowment of additional chapels and places of wor-

forward in consequence of 'very numerous requisitions.' What 'very numerous requisitions,' by-the-bye, may be, I pretend not to decipher. It may be Hindostanee; it may be Sanscrit; it is not English. With a modesty natural to an Oriental Viceroy, the late Master of the Great Mogul, you then make your salaam to the electors, assuring them that but for these very numerous requisitions you 'could not have ventured to aspire to the high distinction of representing Glasgow in Parliament'—of representing Glasgow after having ruled Calcutta!

Your Lordship then proceeds to state, 'frankly and explicitly,' your political creed, 'with a confident hope,' which seems, however, but a somewhat hesitating and trembling trust, that 'nothing will be

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ship for the Established Church of Scotland. I am entirely averse to this grant. The event, of all others, that in my humble judgment would best establish peace and good will and concord among all classes of men, would be a perfect equality of civil and religious rights.

But as this cannot at present be, at least let us be careful not to aggravate an obnoxious distinction. Let the Established Churches retain what they possess, but let nothing more be taken from the public funds. The same religious zeal which exclusively maintains all the places of worship and the ministers of Dissenters cannot fail to supply those additional aids of which the Established Churches of England and Scotland may stand in need.

I will now conclude with the expression of my very deep regret that the effects of the very long and severe illness which drove me from India, will not allow me, without positive risk, to appear at the election. But if I am so fortunate as to obtain the honour to which I aspire, I shall take the earliest opportunity, after the session, of visiting Glasgow; and should it then be the opinion of the majority of my constituents that the generous confidence which they have been pleased to place in me has been in any degree disappointed, I shall be most ready to resign the trust confided in me.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,
Your most obedient servant,
W. BENTINCK.

London: February 4, 1836.

found at variance with those principles which for many years of your life you have professed and practised.' How many years, my Lord William?

After eulogising 'union among all reformers,' but of course in favour of Lord Melbourne's Government, and the abandonment of 'all separate and minor views,' you immediately declare, with admirable consistency, that the Ministerial plan of Irish Church Reform does not go far enough, but is 'imperfect and insufficient.' This is certainly a very felicitous method of maintaining union among all Reformers. There is no doubt with what section of that rebellious camp your Lordship will herd, you who are, 'of course, a decided friend to a complete reform in the Irish municipal corporations.'

Your Lordship, it appears, is also 'favourable to the shortening of the duration of Parliaments,'* although you ingenuously allow that you 'have had no occasion seriously to consider the subject;' and that you are partial to the 'extension of the suffrage,' into the details of which, however, 'you candidly admit you have never entered!' Admirable specimen of the cautious profundity of Whig Radicalism! Inimitable statesman, who busied with concocting constitutions for Sicily, and destroying empires in India, can naturally spare but few hours to the consideration of the unimportant topics of domestic policy.

Your decisive judgment, however, on the subject of the ballot will clear your Lordship in a moment from any silly suspicion of superficiality. This para-

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*It should not be forgotten that the Septennial Act, passed in the second year of George I., was a purely Whig measure.

graph is so rich and rare, that it merits the dangerous honour of a quotation:—

> I am opposed to the vote by ballot; I consider it a complete illusion. It will not destroy the exercise of undue influence, but it will give rise to another influence still more pernicious, that of money and corruption, against which there is no security but in publicity. At the same time, as the vote by ballot affects no existing right, I would willingly acquiesce in the general wishes of my constituents, to vote for it as an experimental and temporary measure.

Without stopping to admire your refined distinction between an influence which is undue, and 'another influence' which is pernicious, one cannot too ardently applaud the breathless rapidity with which your Lordship hurries to assure your future constituents that you will willingly support an illusion and a pest.

The eighth paragraph of this memorable production informs us that your Lordship is 'profoundly penetrated' with an idea. Pardon my scepticism, my Lord; whatever other claims you may have to the epithet, I doubt whether your Lordship's *ideas* are radical. I am indeed mistaken if their roots have ever 'profoundly penetrated' your cultured intellect. Was it this 'profound penetration' that prompted the brother of the Duke of Portland to declare his conviction of 'the indispensable necessity of bringing the two branches of the legislature into harmony with each other by the constitutional exercise of the prerogative of the Crown?' Your Lordship may settle this point with his Grace.

The tenth paragraph is only remarkable for the felicity of its diction. The honourable member for Middlesex has at length found in the future member for Glasgow a rival in the elegance of his language and the precision of his ideas.

But now for your masterpiece! 'The Corn Laws are a difficult question; I am for their abolition.' How exquisitely does this sentence paint your weak and puzzled mind and your base and grovelling spirit! Confessing at the same time your inability to form an opinion, yet gulping down the measure to gain the seat. Space alone prevents me from following the noble candidate for Glasgow through the remainder of his address, admirably characteristic as it is of the same mixture of a perplexed intellect and a profligate ambition.

My Lord, I have not the honour of your acquaintance; I bear you no personal ill-will. I stop not here to inquire into the proceedings of your former life — of your Sicilian freaks or of your Spanish exploits, or of your once impending catastrophe in India. I form my opinion of your character from your last public act, and believing as I do, that there is a conspiracy on foot to palm you off on the nation as a great man, in order that your less hackneyed name may prolong the degrading rule of a desperate faction, I was resolved to chalk your character on your back before you entered the House where you are doomed to be silent or absurd. There are some of your acquaintances who would represent you as by no means an ill-natured man; they speak of you as a sort of dull Quixote. For myself, I believe you to be without any political principle, but that you are unprincipled from the weakness of your head, not from the badness of your heart. Your great connections have thrust you into great places. You have been haunted with a restless conviction that you ought not to be a nonentity, and like bustling men without talents you have always committed great blunders. To avoid

the Scylla of passive impotence, you have sailed into the Charybdis of active incapacity.

But you are, or you will be, member for Glasgow. The author of such an address meets, of course, with 'no opposition.' Discriminating electors of Glasgow! Send up your noble member to the House, where the Government newspapers assure us he will soon be a Minister. His difference with the present Cabinet is trifling. He only deems the Irish Church reform 'imperfect and insufficient.' He is, 'of course,' for a complete reform of the Irish corporations. He is for short parliaments, he is for the ballot,* he is for extension of the suffrage, he is for the abolition of the corn laws, the virtual annihilation of the House of Lords, and the gradual destruction of all alliance between the Church and the State. What more can you require? His Sicilian constitution?

It would, however, be disingenuous to conceal that there is at the conclusion of your Lordship's address a sentence which almost leads one to impute its production to other causes than the impulse of a party or the original weakness of your character. It appears that 'a long and severe illness drove you from India,' and even now incapacitates you from personally soliciting the suffrages of your choice constituents. Have, then, the republican electors of Glasgow, eager to be represented by a Lord, selected

*A slip of the pen. *See* Address: 'I am opposed to the vote by ballot; I consider it a complete illusion.' As a matter of fact, the Whigs were always strenuously opposed to the ballot, and Sydney Smith's powerful pamphlet was used as a mine of arguments against it, though when the more advanced section of the Liberal party pressed the matter on, the Whigs were found as yielding as Lord William Bentinck himself, and were quite as willing as he to 'vote for it as an experimental and temporary measure.'

for their champion in the Senate one of those mere lees of debilitated humanity and exhausted nature which the winds of India and the waves of the Atlantic periodically waft to the hopeless breezes of their native cliffs? The address is ominous; and perhaps ere the excitement of a session may have passed, congenial Cheltenham will receive, from now glorious Glasgow, the antiquated Governor and the drivelling Nabob!

February 11, 1836.

LETTER XI.

TO

VISCOUNT PALMERSTON

FEBRUARY 22, 1836

LETTER XI.

[The following letter is an expression of the bitter feeling with which the King, and the Tories generally, regarded Lord Palmerston at the period at which it was written. Starting in life as a Tory, he was at the early age of two-and-twenty appointed a Junior Lord of the Admiralty in the Duke of Portland's administration. In 1809 he became Secretary at War under Spencer Perceval, and when through the death of the latter at the hands of Bellingham Lord Liverpool succeeded to power, Palmerston remained in office. When Lord Liverpool's ill-health forced him to retire, and Mr. Canning was entrusted with the formation of a Ministry, he still retained his place, as also during the Ministry of Lord Goderich. Having turned Canningite,* he was not, of course, included in the administration of the Duke of Wellington; but his exclusion from office lasted only from May 26, 1828, to November 22, 1830, when he became Foreign Secretary, with a seat in the Cabinet, holding that office until the collapse of the Reform Ministry at the end of 1834. He was not included in the first Melbourne administration, but he returned to the Foreign Office when Melbourne went back in April, 1835, chiefly, it was understood, through the influence of Lord Grey. He was anything but popular. 'He had offended

*In a letter to his brother, written in January, 1828, Palmerston thus explained his somewhat anomalous political position. Speaking of the Whigs he says: 'I very sincerely regret their loss, as I like them much better than the Tories and agree with them much more; but still we, the Canningites, if so we may be termed, did not join their Government, but they came and joined ours; and whatever regard we may feel for them, we have not enlisted with them so as to be bound to follow their fate and fortunes, or to make their retention a condition of our remaining.'

Talleyrand and other members of the diplomatic body past all hope of forgiveness,' says Mr. Torrens in his 'Life of Lord Melbourne.' His manner towards the representatives of other States was often grievously offensive, and he had been guilty more than once of the gross discourtesy of keeping the members of the Conference on the Belgian question waiting long after the hour appointed for their assembling. In the council chamber itself his manners were said to be rude and unconciliatory, and he took an infinity of pains to prove to his colleagues that he cared nothing for their suggestions or their arguments. They resented this mode of treatment, and, according to Mr. Torrens, complained to Holland and Lansdowne.

When Melbourne was forming his second Cabinet he was urged by some of his most trusted advisers to find some other field for the energies of Palmerston than the Foreign Office; but all such proposals were scouted with indignation. Palmerston knew that in the existing condition of foreign affairs he was indispensable to the new government, and he flatly refused to give way on this point. Lord Durham was especially anxious to go to the Foreign Office, and is known to have put considerable pressure on Lord Grey to induce him to use his influence with Palmerston, and to persuade Melbourne to make him the most flattering offers. He might have had the Viceroyalty of Ireland with an English peerage, or he might have gone to India as Governor-General. He refused both proposals. The former he scouted as a tinsel appointment, while as regarded the latter he would only say that his health was not sufficiently robust. Melbourne supported him in spite of Lord Grey's pressure. To satisfy the latter, however, the new Government were prodigal of good things to the Earl's family. His son, Lord Howick, was Secretary at War, with a seat in the Cabinet; his nephew, Sir George Grey, Under Secretary for the Colonies; one son-in-law was made Secretary to the Admiralty and another Ambassador to St. Petersburg. The main point was, however, that Palmerston obtained the Foreign Office. His first act there was hardly one of consummate wisdom. Lord Durham asked for and obtained the Embassy to St. Petersburg, and Palmerston inquired privately whether he would be acceptable to the Czar before submitting his formal appointment to the King. Being told soon afterwards that preliminary inquiries had been made at St. Petersburg, the King was furious, and complained

sharply to Melbourne that he had been slighted by the Foreign Secretary. 'Here,' wrote Melbourne to Lansdowne, in a letter quoted by Mr. Torrens, 'here is the devil to pay about this appointment of Durham. The King has taken great offence at the Emperor of Russia's consent having been obtained before Durham was named to him. I send you the correspondence which has passed. There is another long explanatory letter of Palmerston's which went also to him this morning. His censure of Palmerston is so violent that I know not how I can acquiesce under it.' These facts appear to have crept out, and to have given rise to some of the allusions which will be found in the letter of 'Runnymede.' It is pleasant to remember that Lord Beaconsfield changed his opinion of Palmerston considerably before he died.]

To Viscount Palmerston.

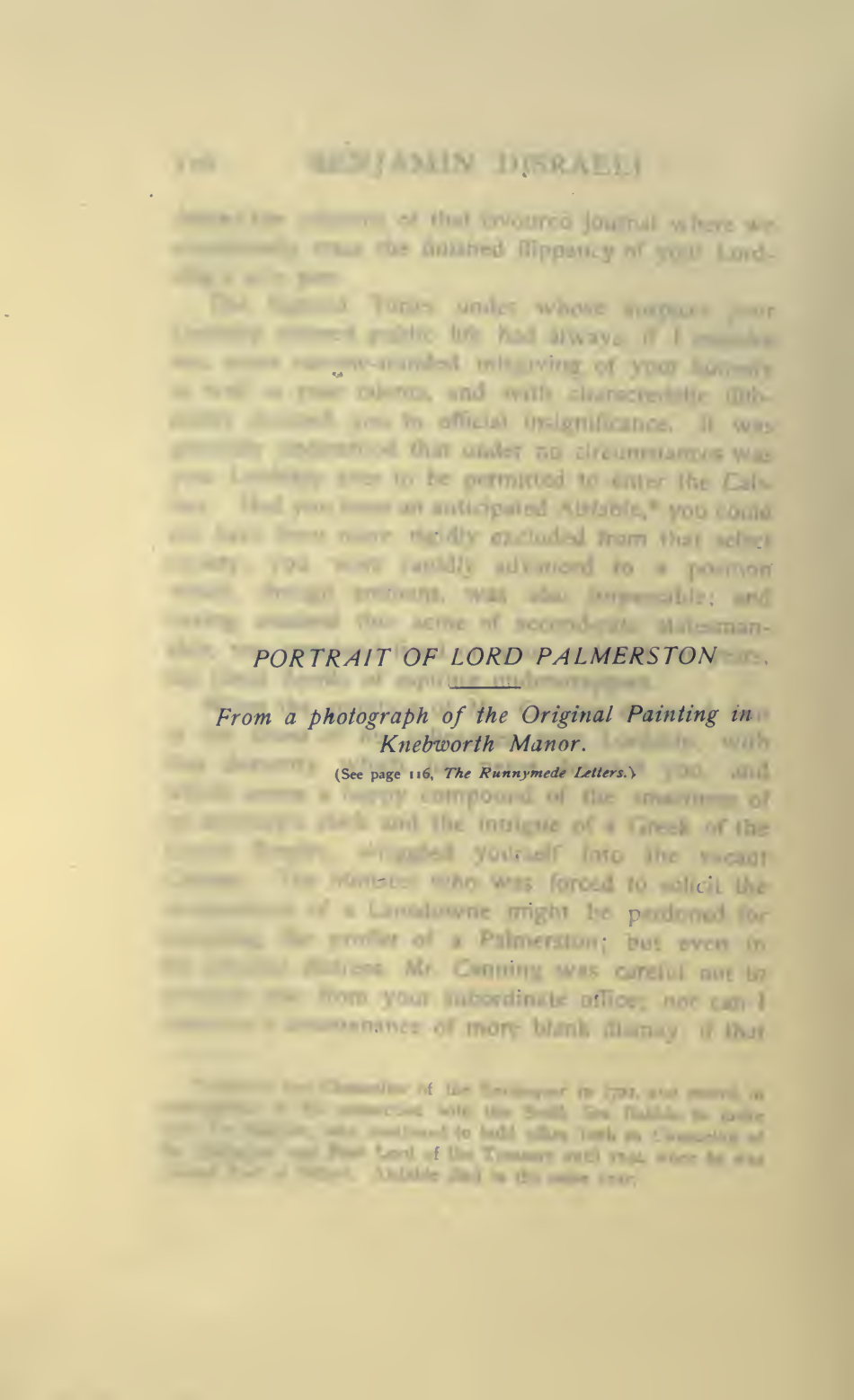
MY LORD,—The Minister who maintains himself in power in spite of the contempt of a whole nation must be gifted with no ordinary capacity. Your Lordship's talents have never had justice done to them. Permit me to approach you in the spirit of eulogy; if novelty have charms, this encomium must gratify you. Our language commands no expression of scorn which has not been exhausted in the celebration of your character; there is no conceivable idea of degradation which has not been, at some period or another, associated with your career. Yet the seven Prime Ministers, all of whom you have served with equal fidelity, might suffice, one would think, with their united certificates, to vamp up the first; and, as for your conduct, so distinguished an orator as your Lordship has recently turned out can never want a medium for its triumphant vindication, even if it were

denied the columns of that favoured journal where we occasionally trace the finished flippancy of your Lordship's airy pen.

The bigoted Tories under whose auspices your Lordship entered public life had always, if I mistake not, some narrow-minded misgiving of your honesty as well as your talents, and with characteristic illiberality doomed you to official insignificance. It was generally understood that under no circumstances was your Lordship ever to be permitted to enter the Cabinet. Had you been an anticipated Aislabie,* you could not have been more rigidly excluded from that select society; you were rapidly advanced to a position which, though eminent, was also impassable; and having attained this acme of second-rate statesmanship, you remained fixed on your pedestal for years, the Great Apollo of aspiring understrappers.

When the ambition of Mr. Canning deprived him of the ablest of his colleagues, your Lordship, with that dexterity which has never deserted you, and which seems a happy compound of the smartness of an attorney's clerk and the intrigue of a Greek of the Lower Empire, wriggled yourself into the vacant Cabinet. The Minister who was forced to solicit the co-operation of a Lansdowne might be pardoned for accepting the proffer of a Palmerston; but even in his extreme distress, Mr. Canning was careful not to promote you from your subordinate office; nor can I conceive a countenance of more blank dismay, if that

*Aislabie was Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1721, and retired in consequence of his connection with the South Sea Bubble, to make room for Walpole, who continued to hold office both as Chancellor of the Exchequer and First Lord of the Treasury until 1742, when he was created Earl of Orford. Aislabie died in the same year.



PORTRAIT OF LORD PALMERSTON

From a photograph of the Original Painting in Knebworth Manor.

(See page 116, *The Runnymede Letters.*)

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brilliant rhetorician, while wandering in the Elysian fields, were to learn that his favourite portfolio was now in your Lordship's protocolic custody.*

A member of Mr. Canning's Cabinet by necessity, you became a member of the Duke of Wellington's by sufferance. You were expelled from your office for playing a third-rate part in a third-rate intrigue.† Your Lordship was piqued, and revenged yourself on your country by becoming a Whig. I remember when, in old days, you addressed the Speaker on our side of the House, your oratorical displays were accompanied not only by the blushes, but even the hesitation of youth. These might have been esteemed the not unpleasing characteristics of an ingenuous modesty, had they not been associated with a callous confidence of tone and an offensive flippancy of language, which proved that they were rather the consequence of a want of breeding than of a deficiency of self-esteem. The leader of the Whig Opposition was wont to say, in return perhaps for some of those pasquinades with which you were then in the habit of squibbing your present friends, that your Lordship reminded him of a favourite footman on easy terms with his mistress. But no sooner had you changed your party than all Brooks's announced you as an orator. You made a speech about windmills and Don Quixote, and your initiation into liberalism was hailed complete. Your Lordship, indeed, was quite

*_See_ the correspondence in vol. i. of Lord Dalling's _Life of Palmerston_.

†The 'intrigue' in question (though, perhaps, it hardly deserves so severe a name) consisted in attempts to force the policy of Mr. Canning and Lord Goderich on the Duke of Wellington. The four 'intriguers' were Huskisson, Grant, Dudley, and Palmerston, all of whom joined the Government in January and left it in May.

steeped in the spirit of the age. You were a new-born babe of that political millennium which gave England at the same time a Reform Bill and your Lordship for a Secretary of State. I can fancy Mr. Charles Grant assisting at your adult baptism, and witnessing your regeneration in pious ecstasy.

The intellectual poverty of that ancient faction who headed a revolution with which they did not sympathise in order to possess themselves of a power which they could not wield was never more singularly manifested than when they delivered the seals of the most important office in the State to a Tory underling. You owe the Whigs great gratitude, my Lord, and therefore I think you will betray them. Their imbecility in offering you those seals was only equalled by your audacity in accepting them. Yet that acceptance was rather impudent than rash. You were justly conscious that the Cabinet of which you formed so ludicrous a member was about to serve out measures of such absorbing interest in our domestic policy, that little time could be spared by the nation to a criticism of your Lordship's labours. During the agitation of Parliamentary Reform your career resembled the last American war in the midst of the revolutions of Europe: it was very disgraceful, but never heard of. Occasionally, indeed, rumours reached the ear of the nation of the Russians being at Constantinople, or the French in Italy and Flanders. Sometimes we were favoured with a report of the effective blockade of our ancient allies, the Dutch; occasionally of the civil wars you had successfully excited in the Peninsula, which we once delivered from a foreign enemy.*

*An allusion to the practical encouragement offered to the various 'Legions' raised for service in Spain and Portugal.

But when life and property were both at stake, when the Trades' Unions were marching through the streets of the metropolis in battle-array, and Bristol was burning, your countrymen might be excused for generally believing that your Lordship's career was as insignificant as your intellect.*

But your saturnalia of undetected scrapes and unpunished blunders is now over. The affairs of the Continent obtrude themselves upon our consideration like an importunate creditor who will no longer be denied. There is no party-cry at home to screen your foreign exploits from critical attention. The author of the *New Whig Guide*† may scribble silly articles in newspapers about justice to Ireland, but he will not succeed in diverting public notice from the painful consequences of his injustice in Europe. To-night, as we are informed, some results of your Lordship's system of non-interference in the affairs of Spain are to brought under the consideration of the House of Commons. I am not in the confidence of the hon. gentleman who will introduce that subject to the notice of the assembly of which, in spite of the electors of Hampshire, your Lordship has

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*Palmerston took no part in general politics in the early part of his life, confining himself to the business of his office and speaking but very seldom in the House. As a writer in the *Times* put the matter: 'Those who knew him only in his later days as the jaunty and evergreen Premier, always foremost in parrying a thrust from the Opposition, in making the best of a bad case, and in covering the retreat of a subordinate, seldom bethought themselves of his twenty years' apprenticeship at the War Office, where he plodded laboriously at the routine of business, writing whole libraries of minutes in a fine, bold, legible hand, and hardly ever opening his mouth on any subject beyond his own special province.'

†Edited by 'E.'; written by H. J. Temple, Lord Palmerston, and others; published 1819.

somehow or other contrived to become a member. But I speak of circumstances with which I am well acquainted, and for the accuracy of which I stake my credit as a public writer, when I declare that of the 10,000 or 12,000 of your fellow-countrymen* whom your crimping Lordship inveigled into a participation in the civil wars of Spain for no other purpose than to extricate yourself from the consequences of your blundering policy, not 3,000 effective men are now in the field; such have been the fatal results of the climate and the cat-o'-nine-tails, of ignoble slaughter and of fruitless hardship. Your Lordship may affect to smile, and settle your cravat as if you were arranging your conscience; you may even prompt the most ill-informed man in his Majesty's dominions — I mean, of course, the First Lord of his Majesty's Treasury — to announce in the Upper House that the career of the British Legion has been a progress of triumph, and that its present situation is a state of comparative comfort; but I repeat my statement, and I declare most solemnly, before God and my country, that I am prepared to substantiate it. When the most impudent and the vilest of your Lordship's supporters next amuses the House with his clap-trap appeals to the tears of the widow and the sighs of the orphan, your Lordship may perhaps remember the responsibility you have yourself incurred, and, sick as the nation may be of this inglorious destruction, there is one silly head, I believe, that it would grieve no one to see added to the heap. It would atone for the havoc, it would extenuate the

* Sir De Lacy Evans's force, raised for the support of Queen Isabella against Don Carlos.

slaughter, and the member for Westminster,* who is a patriot in two countries, would be hailed on his return as the means of having rid both England and Spain of an intolerable nuisance.

For the last five years a mysterious dimness seems to have been stealing over the gems of our imperial diadem. The standard of England droops fitfully upon its staff. He must indeed be an inexperienced mariner who does not mark the ground swell of the coming tempest. If there be a war in Europe to-morrow, it will be a war against English supremacy, and we have no allies. None but your Lordship can suppose that the Cabinet of the Tuileries is not acting in concert with the Court of the Kremlin. Austria, our natural friend on the Continent of Europe, shrinks from the contamination of our political propagandism. If there be an European war, it will be one of those contests wherein a great State requires for its guidance all the resources of a master mind; it would be a crisis which would justify the presence of a Richelieu, a Pombal, or a Pitt. O my country! fortunate, thrice fortunate England! with your destinies at such a moment entrusted to the Lord Fanny of diplomacy! Methinks I can see your Lordship, the Sporus† of politics, cajoling France with an airy compliment, and menacing Russia with a perfumed cane!

February 22, 1836.

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*Evans, who was elected for Westminster in 1833.

†What! that thing of silk?
Sporus that mere white curd of asses' milk?
Satire or sense, alas, can Sporus feel?
Who breaks a butterfly upon the wheel?
Pope, *on Lord Francis Hervey.*

LETTER XII.

TO

SIR JOHN HOBHOUSE

FEBRUARY 27, 1836

LETTER XII.

[There was probably no name which was more familiar to Englishmen in the earlier years of this century than that of John Cam Hobhouse, the friend of Byron, the *protégé* of Sir Francis Burdett, and the 'martyr of liberty'; no one had been more completely forgotten than Hobhouse — then metamorphosed into Lord Broughton — at the time of his death in 1869. The tone adopted by 'Runnymede' in this letter is undeniably severe, but Hobhouse was never popular with his opponents, and always had the credit among them of being a somewhat dull man who made up for the deficiency of his intellect by the violence of his opinions. A 'scion of the house of Whitbread,' he was by birth and training a Whig, but his Whiggism speedily developed into Radicalism of the most advanced school, much to the horror of his worthy and more moderate father, who had been Pitt's Chairman of Committees for many years. His first appearance before the world was in the character of friend and associate of Byron, to whose 'Childe Harold' he wrote elaborate notes. His next was by the publication of a book entitled 'The Substance of some Letters, written by an English Gentleman resident at Paris during the Last Reign of the Emperor Napoleon.' The object of this work was to throw discredit on the restored Bourbons, and to exalt the character and government of that idol of the English Radicals — the Emperor Napoleon. In due course it was translated into French, and gave so much offence to the ruling powers that the translator was sentenced to pay a fine of 1,000f., and to twelve months' imprisonment; the printer and the publisher escaping with half the imprisonment, but a similar fine in each case. Hobhouse's next exploit was to publish a pamphlet in which he used expressions which most people not unnaturally regarded as, if not actually treasonable, at least calculated to promote civil disorder. He was not made the victim of a State trial, however, but his words having been read at the table of the House of Commons, he was committed to Newgate on the Speaker's warrant. This

was on December 13, 1819, and Hobhouse remained in Newgate until the death of George III. (January 29, 1820). In those days there was no surer passport to popular favour than a collision with the constituted authorities, a fact which Hobhouse speedily realised. He had before solicited the suffrages of the electors of Westminster, but without success, the whole influence of the Whig leaders being given to George Lamb, Lord Melbourne's brother. At the election which followed the accession of George IV., Sir Francis Burdett threw all his influence — which in 1820 was enormous — into the scale in favour of Hobhouse. He subscribed 1,000*l.*, and spoke most ardently in praise of the latter's 'warm heart,' which he described as a 'strong pledge of political integrity.' During twelve years Hobhouse supported by voice and vote every measure brought in by the Whigs, and obtained his reward at last by being appointed Secretary at War in Lord Grey's administration of 1832. In 1833 he became Chief Secretary for Ireland, but was defeated in Westminster by Sir De Lacy Evans. In Lord Melbourne's first administration he held the office of Chief Commissioner of Woods and Forests, and in his second, that of President of the Board of Control. He sat in Parliament for Nottingham until 1847, when he had the mortification of finding that his constituents had bettered his instructions, and rejected him for Feargus O'Connor. A seat was, however, found for him at Harwich, which place he represented until 1851, when he was raised to the peerage as Lord Broughton, of Broughton Giffard in the county of Wilts, and faded from the public view.]

To Sir John Hobhouse.

SIR,— Your metamorphosis into a Whig and a Cabinet Minister has always appeared to me even less marvellous than your transformation into a wit and a leader, after having passed the most impetuous years of life in what might have appeared to the inexperienced the less ambitious capacity of a dull dependent. In literature and in politics, until within a very

short period, you have always shone with the doubtful lustre of reflected light. You have gained notoriety by associating yourself with another's fame. The commentator of Byron, you naturally became in due season 'Sir Francis Burdett's man,' as Mr. Canning styled you, to your confusion, in the House of Commons; and to which sneer, after having taken a week to arrange your impromptu, you replied in an elaborate imitation of Chatham, admitted by your friends to be the greatest failure in parliamentary memory. At college your dignified respect for the peerage scarcely prepared us for your subsequent sneers at the order. Your readiness to bear the burden of the scrapes of those you honoured by your intimacy announced the amiability of your temper. Yet, whether you were sacrificing yourself on the altar of friendship, or concocting notes upon the pasquinades which others scribbled, there was always 'something too ponderous about your genius for a joke;'* and when these words fell from your lips on Friday night, to me they seemed to flow with all the practised grace of a *tu quoque,* and to be not so much the inspiration of the moment as the reminiscence of some of those quips and cranks of Mathews† and Scrope Davies‡ of which you were the constant, and often the unconscious, victim.

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*This letter was written by way of answer to a speech of Sir John Cam Hobhouse on the affairs of Spain, in the House of Commons, on the night of Friday, February 26, 1836. The expression in inverted commas occurs in the first page, and is applied to an argument of Sir Robert Peel against the British Legion. He had said that the remnant of that anomalous force would be 'dangerous'; Hobhouse endeavoured to turn the saying into ridicule, but with very indifferent success.

†Charles Mathews the elder.

‡'A little doctor who attends Lady Burdett.'— *Thomas Moore.*

It may be the prejudice of party, perhaps the force of old associations, but to me your new character seems but thinly to veil your ancient reputation. There is a massy poise even in your airiest flights, that reminds one rather of the vulture than the eagle; and your lightest movements are pervaded with a sort of elephantine grace which forces us to admire rather the painful tutorage of art than nature's happier impulse. Bustling at the university, blustering on the hustings, dangling the seals of office—a humble friend, a demagogue, or a placeman—your idiosyncrasy still prevails, and in your case, 'piddling Theobalds' has, at the best, but turned into 'slashing Bentley.'

Allow me to congratulate you on your plaintive confession, amid the roars of the House, that 'circumstances have brought you and your noble friend, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, together on the same bench.'* The honour of sharing the same seat with an individual might, in another's estimation, have sufficed, without the additional disgrace of calling attention to the stigma. There is something so contaminating in a connection with that man, that when

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*'His noble friend (Palmerston) had succeeded in keeping alive and spreading the great flame of freedom which had marked the character and the intellect of the British people ever since we had been a nation, through circumstances of unparalleled difficulty—he had compromised nothing of the nation's dignity, and stood clearer in the face of his country and of surrounding nations, than any Foreign Secretary who had sat upon that bench. Did the noble lord opposite who laughed at what he had just said suppose that he (Hobhouse) said this from any feeling of private regard for his noble friend. He spoke upon very different grounds. Circumstances had brought his noble friend and himself to sit upon the same bench.' These sentences excited much laughter, there being notoriously no particular affection between Hobhouse and his 'noble friend.'

you voluntarily avowed it, we might be excused for admiring your valour rather than your discretion. It is, in truth, a rare conjunction; and circumstance, 'that unspiritual god'—as your illustrious companion, Lord Byron, has happily styled that commonplace divinity,—has seldom had to answer for a more degrading combination. You have met, indeed, like the puritan and the prostitute on the banks of Lethe, in Garrick's farce, with an equally convenient oblivion of the characteristic incidents of your previous careers; you giving up your annual parliaments and universal suffrage, he casting to the winds his close corporations and borough nominees; you whispering Conservatism on the hustings once braying with your revolutionary uproar, he spouting reform in the still recesses of the dust of Downing Street; the one reeking of a Newgate cell, the other redolent of the boudoirs of Mayfair; yet both of them, the Tory underling and the Radical demagogue alike, closing the ludicrous contrast with one grand diapason of harmonious inconsistency—both merging in the Whig Minister.

That a politician may at different periods of his life, and under very different aspects of public affairs, conscientiously entertain varying opinions upon the same measure, is a principle which no member of the present House of Commons is entitled to question. I would not deny you, sir, the benefit of the charity of society; but when every change of opinion in a man's career is invariably attended by a corresponding and advantageous change in his position, his motives are not merely open to suspicion—his conduct is liable to conviction. Yet there is one revolution in your sentiments on which I may be permitted particularly to congratulate you, and that country which you as-

sist in misgoverning. Your sympathy on Friday night with the success of the British arms came with a consoling grace and a compensatory retribution from the man who has recorded in a solemn quarto his bitter regret that his countrymen were victorious at Waterloo.* I always admired the Whig felicity of your appointment as Secretary at War.

Pardon, sir, the freedom with which I venture to address you. My candour may at least be as salutary as the cabbage-stalks of your late constituents.† There are some indeed, who, as I am informed, have murmured at this method of communicating to them my opinion of their characters and careers. Yet I can conceive an individual so circumstanced that he would scarcely be entitled to indulge in such querulous sensitiveness. He should be one who had himself published letters without the ratification of his name, and then suppressed them; he should be one who had sat in trembling silence in the House when he was dared to repeat the statement which he had circulated by the press; he should be one to whom it had been asserted in his teeth, that he was 'a liar and a scoundrel, and only wanted courage to be an assassin.' It does not appear to me that such an individual could complain with any justice of the frankness of 'Runnymede.'

February 27, 1836.

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* The *Letters of an English Gentleman* referred to in the prefatory note.

† *i.e.* at Westminster.

LETTER XIII.

TO

LORD GLENELG

MARCH 12, 1836

LETTER XIII.

[Charles Grant, first and last Baron Glenelg, was born in India in 1780—a fact which seemed sufficient in the eyes of Lord Grey to justify his appointment in the Reform administration as President of the Board of Control. He must, however, have quitted India very young, for he was no more than one-and-twenty when he left Cambridge as fourth Wrangler and Chancellor's medallist—a position which implies a good deal more than an Indian training can supply. He entered Parliament in 1807 as a Tory, and his official life began in 1819, when he became Chief Secretary for Ireland. His city connections procured for him the appointment, first as Vice-President and then as President of the Board of Trade. When Reform became inevitable he turned Whig, and was rewarded for his change of opinion with the office of President of the Board of Control—or, as would be said in these later days, with the India Office. He was not remarkably successful there. No one impeached his honesty or his candour, but he was very generally regarded as one of the true type of Whig officials—gentlemen who cling to office as tenaciously as a limpet to the rock, and who are distinguished not by any special abilities, but by a kind of patient plodding industry, which is very useful to the State, but which notoriously does not betoken the possession of any exceptionally brilliant abilities.

In office Lord Glenelg was not distinguished. A lethargic temperament, combined with the acceptance of certain political principles which never developed themselves so perfectly as under the 'Can't you let it alone?' rule of Lord Melbourne, created grave dangers to the empire, and especially excited against him the wrath of the sovereign. Charles Greville tells a curious story of him when in 1835 the govern-

ment of Canada was entrusted to three Commissioners. One of them, Sir Charles Grey, was compelled to listen to what Greville describes as 'a most curious burst of eloquence from his Majesty' (William IV.). In the course of it he reminded Sir Charles that Canada had been won 'by the sword,' and charged him by his oath 'strenuously to assert those prerogatives of which persons who ought to have known better have dared even in my presence to deny the existence.' The allusion was very obviously to Lord Glenelg, and, as appears from a subsequent passage in the Diary, the King was perfectly right and Lord Glenelg in the wrong. An ordinary man would have retired at once—Lord Glenelg did nothing of the sort. It was, in fact, at this time a part of the Whig policy for Ministers to represent themselves not as the King's Ministers, but as the representatives of the people—a line of action against which Lord Beaconsfield protested most earnestly on a hundred occasions. Lord Glenelg continued to cling to office, therefore, but he came to grief in 1839. The Canadian insurrection had to be put down with a strong hand, but Lord Durham carried things a little too far. The Papineau rebellion, which had arisen out of the hostility between the English and French races, evoked from the Governor the famous 'Ordinance,' which very nearly lost that colony to England. Under its provisions those of the rebels who had acknowledged their guilt and submitted to the Crown were to be sent as prisoners to Bermuda, and punished with death if they presumed to return. The authorities at home, wiser than Lord Durham, disallowed the Ordinance and recalled its author. Lord Glenelg, who had approved it, felt himself compelled to retire, and with that step his official career came to an end. A grateful country, however, gave him the office of Commissioner of Land Tax and a pension of 2,000*l.* a year, which he enjoyed until his death in 1866—twenty-seven years—at the age of eighty-seven.]

*To Lord Glenelg.**

Y LORD,—Let me not disturb your slumbers too rudely: I will address you in a whisper, and on tip-toe. At length I have succeeded in penetrating the recesses of your enchanted abode. The knight who roused the Sleeping Beauty could not have witnessed stranger marvels in his progress than he who has at last contrived to obtain an interview with the sleeping Secretary.

The moment that I had passed the Foreign Office an air of profound repose seemed to pervade Downing Street, and as I approached the portal of your department, it was with difficulty I could resist the narcotic influence of the atmosphere. Your porter is no Argus. 'His calm, broad, thoughtless aspect breathed repose,' and when he 'slow from the bench arose, and swollen with sleep,' I almost imagined that, like his celebrated predecessor in the Castle of Indolence, he was about to furnish me with a night-cap, slippers, and a *robe de chambre*. I found your clerks yawning, and your under-secretaries just waking from a dream. A dozy, drowsy, drony hum, the faint rustling of some papers like the leaves of autumn, and a few noiseless apparitions gliding like ghosts, just assured me that the business of the nation was not neglected. Every personage and every incident gradually prepared me for the quiescent presence of the master mind, until, adroitly stepping over your

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*Colonial Secretary in Lord Melbourne's second administration.

private secretary, nodding and recumbent at your threshold, I found myself before your Lordship, the guardian of our colonial empire, stretched on an easy couch in luxurious listlessness, with all the prim voluptuousness of a puritanical Sardanapalus.

I forget who was the wild theorist who enunciated the absurd doctrine that 'ships, colonies, and commerce' were the surest foundation of the empire. What an infinitely ridiculous idea! But the march of intellect and the spirit of the age have cleansed our brains of this perilous stuff. Had it not been for the invention of ships, the great malady of sea-sickness, so distressing to an indolent Minister, would be unknown; colonies, like country-houses, we have long recognised to be sources only of continual expense, and to be kept up merely from a puerile love of show; as for commerce, it is a vulgarism, and fit only for low people. What have such dainty nobles as yourself and Lord Palmerston to do with cottons and indigoes? Such coarse details you fitly leave to Mr. Poulett Thomson,* whose practical acquaintance with tallow is the only blot on the scutcheon of your refined and aristocratic Cabinet.

Although a grateful nation has seized every opportunity of expressing their confidence in your Lordship and your colleagues, and although I, among more distinguished writers, have omitted no occasion of celebrating your inexhaustible panegyric, it appears to me, I confess, that scant justice has hitherto been done to the grand system of our present administration, a system which they are putting in practice with

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*Then President of the Board of Trade, afterwards distinguished in Canada.

felicitous rapidity and their habitual success. This grand system, it would seem, consists of a plan to govern the country without having anything to do.

The meritorious and unceasing labours of the noble Secretary for Foreign Affairs for the destruction of English influence on the Continent will soon permit his Lordship to receive his salary without any necessary attendance at his office. Lord Morpeth* has nearly got rid of Ireland. The selection of your Lordship to regulate the destinies of our colonies insures the speediest and the most favourable results in effecting their emancipation from what one of your principal supporters styles 'the unjust domination of the mother country;' and we are already promised a Lord Chancellor who is not to preside over the Chancery. The recent government of Lord William Bentinck will, I fear, rob Sir John Hobhouse of half the glory of losing India, and the municipal corporations, if they work as well as you anticipate, may in due season permit Lord John Russell to resume his relinquished lyre. Freed of our colonies, Ireland, and India, the affairs of the Continent consigned to their own insignificance, Westminster Hall delivered over to the cheap lawyers, and our domestic polity regulated by vestries and town-councils, there is a fair probability that the First Lord of the Treasury, who envies you your congenial repose, may be relieved from any very onerous burden of public duty, and that the Treasury may establish the aptness of its title on the *non lucendo* character of its once shining coffers.

Vive la bagatelle! His Majesty's Ministers may then hold Cabinet Councils to arrange a whitebait

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*Chief Secretary for Ireland.

dinner at Blackwall, or prick for an excursion to Richmond or Beulah Spa. Such may be the gay consequences of a Reform Ministry and a Reform Parliament! No true patriot will grudge them these slight recreations, or hazard even a murmur at their sinecure salaries. For, to say the truth, my Lord, if you must remain in office, I for one would willingly consent to an inactivity on your part almost as complete as could be devised by the united genius for sauntering of yourself and that energetic and laborious nobleman who summoned you to a worthy participation in his councils.

Affairs, therefore, my dear Lord Glenelg, are far from disheartening, especially in that department under your own circumspect supervision. What if the Mauritius be restive;* let the inhabitants cut each others' throats, that will ultimately produce peace. What if Jamaica† be in flames, we have still East India sugar; and by the time we have lost that, the manufacture of beet-root will be perfect. What if Colonel Torrens,‡ perched on the Pisgah height of a joint-stock company, be transporting our fellow-countrymen to the milk and honey of Australia, without even the preparatory ceremony of a trial by jury—let the exiles settle this great constitutional question with the

* There had been considerable disturbance in the Mauritius consequent upon the abolition of negro slavery, and in February Mr. Roebuck moved for a Committee of Inquiry into the grievances of the disaffected islanders. The Committee was refused, but an impression very generally prevailed that the relations of the Colonial Office with the Mauritius were very unsatisfactory.

† Jamaica had become so disturbed since emancipation that the Governor (the Marquis of Sligo) was recalled in September, 1836.

‡ The section of economists led by Colonel Torrens advocated systematic emigration as a remedy for popular destitution and for the discontent created by the working of the New Poor Law.

kangaroos. What if Canada be in rebellion — let not the menacing spectre of Papineau* or the suppliant shade of the liberal Gosford† scare your Lordship's dreams. Slumber on without a pang, most vigilant of Secretaries. I will stuff you a fresh pillow with your unanswered letters, and insure you a certain lullaby by reading to you one of your own despatches.

March 12, 1836.

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*The leader of the democratic or French party in the troubles of 1835–7.

†Lord Gosford; appointed Governor of Canada on the accession of the second Melbourne administration.

LETTER XIV.

TO

THE RIGHT HON. EDWARD ELLICE

MARCH 20, 1836.

LETTER XIV.

[The opening paragraphs of this letter would seem to have been written in an absolutely ironical mood: when Mr. Ellice died in September, 1863, perhaps no one would have been more ready than Lord Beaconsfield to acknowledge that much of what he had said ironically was more than justified in fact. Mr. Ellice was a Whig, and an official Whig to boot, but he was a man of transparent honesty, and one who was moreover capable of making great sacrifices for the principles in which he placed his faith. His official career meant the loss of much money, and of the opportunities of acquiring more, while his political life implied for many years a princely expenditure. Nor did he seek for rewards. Allied though he was by his two marriages to two of the greatest and most influential Whig families — those of Lord Grey and Lord Leicester (Mr. Coke of Holkham), and able, had he so chosen, to command a peerage at any moment, he lived and died a commoner, and an Englishman of whom his countrymen might very reasonably be proud.

The son of a London merchant, Mr. Ellice always retained his connection with the city. He was educated at Winchester and St. Andrews; studied the classics, and attended lectures on Logic, Rhetoric, and Moral Philosophy; but he deserted these higher subjects to take a stool in his father's office. When he was barely eight-and-twenty he obtained a seat in Parliament as member for Coventry, and except during the four years 1826–30, he continued to represent that city until his death in 1863. The fact affords a somewhat striking proof of his wealth. Coventry was, under the old system, one of the most costly boroughs in England. The franchise was in the hands of the freemen and of the corporation. A great number of the former were non-resident, and it

was the custom of candidates to bring down these electors from London and other places in chaises-and-four, and to keep them for three or four days at an hotel, in order that they might record their votes. This Mr. Ellice most religiously did, and as a consequence, his election expenses were such as could be borne only by a capitalist such as he, with possessions in Hudson's Bay, in Canada, and in the West Indies. Yet even he once suffered defeat. A gentleman named Heathcote, with a still longer purse, sent Mr. Ellice into obscurity for four years. He returned to Parliament in 1831, and from that time forward never lost his popularity with the people of Coventry. He found it unnecessary to canvass them. All that he cared to do was to make speeches to his constituents in their ordinary places of resort and to contribute munificently to local charities.

Unfortunately, Mr. Ellice was without doubt a sharer in the two intrigues which respectively brought about the ruin of Lord Grey's Government in 1834, and of that of Sir Robert Peel in 1835. Writing under date July 10, 1834, Charles Greville says:—'I met Duncannon, Ellice, and John Russell this evening riding, and they seemed in very good spirits. I have no doubt Ellice and Duncannon had a main hand in all this business (*i.e.*, the overthrow of Earl Grey), and that they urged on Littleton (the Irish Secretary, who was generally credited with being the prime mover in the intrigue), to do what he did.' Later on Mr. Ellice was indubitably the vehicle of communication between Lord Melbourne's administration and O'Connell. We have it on the authority of Mr. McCullagh Torrens, that when Lord Melbourne's second administration was formed, it was Mr. Ellice who was deputed to inform O'Connell that his name could not be included in the list of members. O'Connell himself was bitterly disappointed. He had reckoned on office with so much confidence that he had actually commissioned his son to look out for a house suitable for that hospitality which he proposed to dispense when he should have become Lord Chancellor of Ireland. Even the joy of being Lord Mayor of Dublin, and of making State journeys to all the ends of the seven kingdoms of Ireland, hardly consoled him. He had expected to be made head of the judicial system of his country, and he was passed over. All the gold chains in the world, and all that 'me Larding' of which Mr. Thackeray makes such bitter fun, could hardly atone for such a disappointment.

In the Lichfield House compact Mr. Ellice unquestionably acted as go-between. When Lord Melbourne returned to office in virtue of that most flagitious arrangement, Lord Alvanley—one of the 'bucks' of the Regency, a wit and a man of fashion—rose in his place to read a letter lately published by O'Connell, in which he asserted his unshrinking faith in the Repeal of the Union, coupled with the 'reform of the House of Lords,' as the only possible remedy for the woes and sufferings and wrongs of his beloved country. Lord Alvanley went on to say that he wished to know from Lord Melbourne how far he coincided with Mr. O'Connell's opinion as regarded the constitution of that House (of Lords) and the Repeal of the Union. 'I ask him,' he went on, 'on what terms he has negotiated with Mr. O'Connell, and how far he stands committed to that honourable and learned gentleman who most solemnly declares he will never rest until he has effected the Repeal of the Union.' Lord Melbourne's answer was courageous, to say the least. After a scene in which Brougham distinguished himself—not altogether creditably—by entreating Lord Melbourne not to answer the question, the latter distinctly disavowed O'Connell. 'My noble friend asked me how far I coincided with the opinions of Mr. O'Connell with respect to this House. I answer, not at all. . . . The noble Lord asked me whether I have taken any means to secure the assistance of Mr. O'Connell, and if so, upon what terms. I answer that I know not whether I shall have the aid of Mr. O'Connell. I have certainly taken no means to secure it, and most particularly I have made no terms with Mr. O'Connell. . . . There is no foundation, directly or indirectly, for such a statement.' There is such a thing as economy of truth. Lord Melbourne, personally, had without doubt made no terms with Daniel O'Connell, but somebody had unquestionably done so, and public opinion pointed to Mr. Ellice as the ambassador. Hence the acrimony of 'Runnymede's' letter.]

To the Right Hon. Edward Ellice.

IR,—In this age of faction, it is delightful to turn to one public character whom writers of all parties must unite in addressing in terms of unqualified panegyric. From a 'man discreditably known in the city,' you have become a statesman creditably known at Court. Such is the triumph of perseverance in a good cause, undaunted by calumny and undeterred by the narrow-minded scruples of petty intellects. That influence which, in spite of prejudice, you have gained by the uniform straightforwardness of your conduct, you have confirmed by that agreeable and captivating demeanour which secures you the hearts of men as well as their confidence. Uninfluenced by personal motives, always ready to sacrifice self, and recoiling from intrigue with the antipathy of a noble mind, you stand out in bold and favourable relief to the leaders of that party whose destinies, from a purely patriotic motive, you occasionally condescend to regulate.

I ought, perhaps, before this to have congratulated you on your return to that country whose interests are never absent from your thoughts; but I was unwilling to disturb, even with my compliments, a gentleman who, I am aware, has been labouring of late so zealously for the commonweal as the Right Hon. Mr. Ellice. Your devotion in your recent volunteer visit to Constantinople has not been lost on the minds of your countrymen. They readily recognise your pre-eminent fitness to wrestle with the Russian bear;

and they who have witnessed in a northern forest a duel between those polished animals must feel convinced that you are the only English statesman duly qualified to mingle in a combat which is at the same time so dexterous and so desperate. Happy England, whose fortunes are supervised by such an unsalaried steward as the member for Coventry! Thrice fortunate Telemachus of Lambton Castle, guided by such a Mentor!

After the turmoil of party politics, you must have found travel delightful! I can fancy you gazing upon the blue Symplegades, or roaming amid the *tumuli* of Troy. The first glance at the Ægean must have filled you with classic rapture. Your cultured and accomplished mind must have revelled in the recollections of the heroic past. How different from the associations of those jobbing politicians who, when they sail upon Salamis, are reminded only of Greek bonds, and whose thoughts, when they mingle amid the imaginary tumult of the Pnyx at Athens, recur only to the broils of a settling day on the Stock Exchange of London!

In your political career you have emulated the fame and rivalled, if not surpassed, the exploits of the great Earl of Warwick. He was only a King-maker, but Mr. Ellice is a maker of Ministers. How deeply was Lord Grey indebted to your disinterested services! Amid the musings of the Literum of Howick,* while moralising on the gratitude of a

* Liternum was the town to which Scipio Africanus retired in disgust at the injustice of his countrymen, and in which he was buried. His tomb there bears the inscription, INGRATA PATRIA NE OSSA QUIDEM MEA HABES. Howick was the seat to which Lord Grey retired after the break-up of the Reform Ministry.

party, how fondly must he congratulate himself on his fortune in such a relative.* It is said that his successor is not so prompt to indicate his sense of your services as would be but just. But the ingratitude of men, and especially of Ministers, is proverbial. Lord Melbourne, however, may yet live to be sensible of your amiable exercise of the prerogative of the Crown. In the meantime the unbounded confidence of Lord Palmerston in your good intentions may in some degree console you for the suspicions of the Prime Minister, to say nothing of the illimitable trust of the noble Secretary for the Colonies, who sleeps on in unbroken security as long as you are the guardian angel of his slumbers.

Distinguished as you are by the inflexible integrity of your conduct, both in public and private life, by your bland manners and your polite carriage, your total absence of all low ambition and your contempt for all intrigue and subterranean practices, you are, if possible, still more eminent for your philosophical exemption from antiquated prejudice. The people of England can never forget that it was your emancipated mind that first soared superior to the mischievous institution of a National Church, and that, with the characteristic liberality of your nature, yours was the intellect that first devised the ingenious plan of appeasing Ireland by the sacrifice of England. Had you been influenced in your conduct by the factious object of establishing your friends in the enjoyment of a power to exercise which they had previously proved themselves incapable, it might in some degree have deteriorated from

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*Mr. Ellice had married the youngest sister of Earl Grey.

the singleness of your purpose; but no one can suppose, for an instant, that in forming a close alliance one year with a man whom twelve months before they had denounced as a rebel, or in decreeing the destruction of an institution which they had just recently pledged themselves to uphold, your pupils of the present administration were actuated by any other motives but the most just, the most disinterested, and the most honourable.

You have recently been gratified by witnessing the proud and predominant influence of your country in the distant and distracted regions of the East. The compliments which were lavished on yourself and your companion by the Czar must have been as flattering to the envoy as they were to the confiding sovereign with whose dignity you were entrusted. It must be some time before the salutes of Odessa cease ringing in your ear, and it cannot be supposed that your excited imagination can speedily disembarrass itself of your splendid progress in a steamer over the triumphant waters of the Euxine. Yet, when you have in some degree recovered from the intoxication of success and the inebriating influence of Royal and Imperial condescension, let us hope that you may deign to extend your practised attention to our domestic situation. The country is very prosperous; the Stock Exchange has not been so active since 1825. They certainly have missed you a little in Spanish, but the railways, I understand, have been looking up since your return, especially the shares of those companies which have no hope or intention of prosecuting their designs. In the meantime, perhaps, for you may be destined the glory of inducing Lord Melbourne to tolerate the presence of Mr. O'Connell

at an official banquet. That would be an achievement worthy of your great mind. The new Liberal Club, too, which, like Eldorado, is to supply

> Shirts for the shirtless, suppers for the starved,

may merit your organising patronage. For the rest, the unbounded confidence which subsists between our gracious Sovereign and his Ministers, the complete harmony at length established between the two Houses of Parliament, the perfect tranquillity of Ireland, vouched by the *de facto* member for Dublin, and guaranteed by Lord Plunket, and the agreeable circumstance that the people of England are arrayed in two hostile and determined parties, all combine to assure us of a long, a tranquil, and a prosperous administration of our affairs by the last Cabinet which was constructed under your auspices.

March 20, 1836.

LETTER XV.

TO

VISCOUNT MELBOURNE

March 30, 1836

LETTER XV.

To Viscount Melbourne.

MY LORD,—I always experience peculiar gratification in addressing your Lordship—your Lordship is such a general favourite. I have read somewhere of 'the best-natured man with the worst-natured muse.'* I have always deemed your Lordship the best-natured Minister with the worst-natured party. And really, if you have sometimes so lost your temper—if for those Epicurean shrugs of the shoulder, and *nil admirari* smiles, which were once your winning characteristics, you have occasionally of late substituted a little of the Cambyses vein, and demeaned yourself as if you were practising 'Pistol' for the next private theatricals at Panshanger—very extenuating circumstances may, I think, be found in the heterogeneous and Hudibrastic elements of that party which Fate, in a freak of fun, has called upon your Lordship to regulate. What a crew! I can compare them to nothing but the Schwalbach swine in the Brunnen Bubbles, guzzling and grunting in a bed of mire, fouling them-

*'The best good man with the worst-natured muse'
(Sackville, Lord Buckhurst).—*Rochester.*

selves, and bedaubing every luckless passenger with their contaminating filth.*

We are all now going into the country,† and you and your colleagues are about to escape for a season from what your Lordship delicately terms the 'badgering' of Parliament. I trust you will find the relaxation renovating. How you will recreate yourselves, we shall be anxious to learn. I think the Cabinet might take to cricket; they are a choice eleven. With their peculiarly patriotic temperaments and highly national feelings, they might venture, I think, to play against 'all England.' Lord Palmerston and Lord Glenelg, with their talent for keeping in, would assuredly secure a good score. Lord John, indeed, with all his flourishing, will probably end in knocking down his own wicket; and as for Sir Cam,‡ the chances certainly are that he will be 'caught out,' experiencing the same fate in play as in politics. If you could only engage Lord Durham to fling sticks at the seals of the Foreign Office, and the agile Mr. Ellice to climb a greasy pole for the Colonial portfolio, I think you will have provided a very entertaining programme of Easter sports.

My Lord, they say, you know, when things are at the worst, they generally mend. On this principle our affairs may really be considered highly promising. The state of Spain demonstrates the sagacity of our Foreign Secretary.§ The country is divided

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*See the chapter, 'The Schwein-General,' in Sir Francis Head's *Bubbles from the Brunnens of Nassau.*

†Written on the eve of the Easter recess.

‡Sir John Cam Hobhouse.

§Palmerston, whose action in the matter of Sir De Lacy Evans's Foreign Legion was a very sore subject at this time.

into two great parties; we have contrived to interfere without supporting either, but have lavished our treasure and our blood in upholding a Camarilla. This is so bad, that really the happiest results may speedily be anticipated. Canada is in a state of rebellion, and therefore after Easter we may perhaps find loyalty and peace predominant, especially when we recall to our recollection the profound intellect* your Lordship has selected for the settlement of that distracted colony. The Whigs, my Lord, seem indeed to have a happy knack in the choice of Governors, and almost to rival in their appointments the Duke in *Don Quixote*. To them we are indebted alike for the prescient firmness of a Gosford† and the substantial judgment of a Sligo.‡ The spring-like promise of the experienced Elphinstone will explain the genial seed so deftly sown by the noble member for Glasgow,§ and complete the trio. Three wise and learned rulers! To whomsoever of my leash my Lord Glenelg may award the golden palm, I doubt not it will prove an apple of sufficient discord.

But all our praises why should Lords engross?

particularly when the appointments of Lord Auckland‖ and Lord Nugent¶ are duly mentioned.

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*Lord Glenelg.

†Lord Gosford, Governor of Canada.

‡Lately displaced from the Government of Jamaica.

§Lord William Bentinck.

‖Governor-General of India, under whose administration the disastrous Afghan war occurred.

¶High Commissioner of the Ionian Islands under Lord Grey, but recalled by Sir Robert Peel.

Rise, honest muse, and sing Sir Francis Head!*

The convenient candour of that celebrated functionary will at least afford one solacing reminiscence for your Easter Holidays.

But what is Spanish anarchy or Canadian rebellion, the broils of Jamaica or the impending catastrophe of Hindostan, when Ireland is tranquil? And who can doubt the tranquillity of Ireland? Has not your Lordship the bond of the trustworthy Mr. O'Connell, whose private praises you celebrate with such curious felicity, and the choice collateral security of the veracious Lord Plunket? With such a muniment in the strong box of your Cabinet securities, what care you for the charges of Baron Smith and the calendar of Tipperary? And yet, my Lord, though Ireland is tranquil, and though the Papists, in their attempts on the lives of their rivals, seem of late charitably to have substituted perjury for massacre, I fancy I mark a cloud upon your triumphant brow at my incidental mention of that fortunate land. Be of good cheer, my Lord; and if you cannot be bold, at least be reckless. In spite of the elaborate misrepresentations of party, the state of Irish affairs is very simple. The point lies in a nutshell, and may be expressed in a single sentence. Your Lordship's accommodation bills with Mr. O'Connell are becoming due, and unless you can contrive to get them renewed, the chances are your Lordship's firm will become bankrupt.

It seems, my Lord, that the honorable member for Finsbury† is about to move a petition to our gracious

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*Sir F. B. Head; appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada in 1835. Under his administration the rebellion of 1837 broke out.

†Thomas Duncombe.

sovereign to intercede with the King of the French in favour of the State-victims of the three glorious days, persecuted like other great men for anticipating their age, and attempting to do that in 1830 the consummation of which was reserved for 1835. My Lord, buffoonery after a while wearies; put an end, I beseech you, to the farce of your Government, and, to save time, consent at once that you and your colleagues should be substituted in their stead. Nay, I wish not to be harsh; my nature is not vindictive. I would condemn you to no severer solitude than the gardens of Hampton Court, where you might saunter away the remaining years of your now ludicrous existence, sipping the last novel of *Paul de Kock,* while lounging over a sun-dial.

March 30, 1836.

LETTER XVI.

TO

THE HOUSE OF LORDS

April 18, 1836

LETTER XVI.

[The immediate occasion of the following letter was the debate in the House of Lords on the second reading of the Municipal Corporations (Ireland) Bill, the object of which, whether avowed or not, was to break down the Protestant ascendancy in Ireland. In the course of that debate Lord Lyndhurst made a powerful speech, urging that the effect of the Bill would be to throw the control of public affairs entirely into the hands of the Roman Catholic clergy, who at that time, and in fact ever since the passing of the Catholic Emancipation Act, exercised a tyranny which can only be described as ferocious. At parliamentary elections Catholic priests uniformly denounced those who did not vote for the candidates of their choice as enemies of their country and their God. The Municipal Corporations Bill proposed to extend the popular vote in such a way as to bring not merely parliamentary candidates but candidates for the offices of town councillor or alderman under the same influences. It was against this principle, and against the tyranny of O'Connell, whose 'rent' was extorted from the starving peasantry at the doors of the chapels and under the pressure of the Irish priesthood, all over Ireland, that the invective of 'Runnymede' was directed.]

To the House of Lords.

MY LORDS,—If there be one legislative quality more valuable than another, it is the power of discriminating between the CAUSE and the PRETEXT. For two sessions of Parliament an attempt has been made to force upon your Lordships' adoption a peculiar scheme of policy under the pretext of doing 'justice to Ire-

land.' A majority of the members of the House of Commons, no matter how obtained, have not felt competent, or inclined, to penetrate beneath the surface of this plausible plea. They have accepted the pretext as a sound and genuine principle of conduct, and have called for your Lordships' co-operation in measures which you have declined to sanction, because you believe you have distinguished the concealed from the ostensible motive of their proposition. Your Lordships believe, that under the pretext of doing 'justice to Ireland,' you are called upon to do 'injustice to England,' and to assist the cause of Irish independence and papal supremacy.

My Lords, the English nation agrees with you. The experience of the last few years has not been lost upon your reflective countrymen. Under the pretext of emancipating the Irish people, they have witnessed the establishment of the dominion of a foreign priesthood — under the pretext of Parliamentary Reform, they have witnessed the delusive substitution of the Whig Government — under the pretext of Municipal Reform in England, they have seen a sectarian oligarchy invested with a monopoly of power, tainting the very fountains of justice, and introducing into the privacy of domestic life all the acerbities of public faction — and under the pretext of 'justice to Ireland,' they have already beheld the destruction of Protestant ascendancy, and the Papacy, if not supreme, at least rampant. The English nation are reaping the bitter fruits of not sufficiently discriminating between the ostensible and concealed purposes of legislation. Had they been aware some years back, as they now keenly feel, that they were only extending power and privileges to a priesthood when they thought they

were emancipating a people, the miserable dilemmas of modern politics would never have occurred. They would not have witnessed the gentlemen of Ireland driven from its parliamentary representation, and deprived of their local influence; they would not have witnessed a fierce and bloody war waged against the property of the Protestant Church and the lives of its ministers; they would not have witnessed the Imperial Parliament occupied in a solemn debate on the propriety of maintaining the legislative union. Political revolutions are always effected by virtue of abstract pleas. 'Justice to Ireland' is about as definite as 'the Rights of Man.' If the Irish have an equal right with ourselves to popular corporations, have they less a right to a domestic Legislature or a native Sovereign? My Lords, are you prepared to go this length? Are you prepared to dismiss circumstances from your consideration, and legislate solely upon principles? Is the British Senate an assembly of dreaming schoolmen, that they are resolved to deal with words in preference to facts? Is a great empire to be dissolved by an idle logomachy? If Dublin has an equal right with Westminster to the presence of a Parliament, is the right of York less valid? Be consistent, my Lords, in the development of the new system of politics. Repeal the Union, and revive the Heptarchy.

When the Irish papists were admitted to the Imperial Parliament, we were told that they would consist of a few gentlemen of ancient family and fortune. That class is already banished from our councils. When the Protestant Establishment in Ireland was reformed by the Whigs, we were told that the Church in Ireland would then be as safe as the Church in

Yorkshire. That Establishment is now an eleemosynary one. When the repeal of the union was discussed in the English Parliament, we were told that it was only supported by a feeble section. That section now decides the fate of the British Government and the policy of the British empire. Because much has been conceded, we are told that all must be given up; because the Irish papists have shown themselves unworthy of a political franchise, we are told that it necessarily follows that they should be entrusted with a municipal one; because

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This new system of inductive reasoning may pass current with some bankrupt noble, panting to nestle in the bowers of Downing Street; this topsy-turvy logic may flash conviction on the mind of some penniless expectant of the broken victuals of the official banquet; but the people of England recoil with disgust from the dangerous balderdash, and look up to your Lordships as their hereditary leaders, to stand between the ark of the constitution and the unhallowed hands that are thrust forward to soil its splendour and violate its sanctity. The people of England are not so far divorced from their ancient valour, that after having withstood Napoleon and the whole world in arms, they are to sink before a horde of their manumitted serfs, and the *nisi prius* demagogue whom a foreign priesthood have hired to talk treason on their blasphemous behalf.* After having routed the lion, we will not be preyed upon by the wolf. If we are to fall, if this great empire, raised by the heroic energies of the English nation—that nation of

* Daniel O'Connell.

which your fathers formed a part—is indeed to be dissolved, let us hope that the last moments of our career may prove at least an euthanasia: let no pestilent blight, after our meridian glory, sully the splendour of our setting; and whether we fall before the foreign foe we have so often baffled, or whether by some mysterious combination of irresistible circumstances, our empire sinks like the Queen of the Adriatic beneath the waves that we still rule, let not the records of our future annalist preserve a fact which, after all our greatness, might well break the spirit of the coming generations of our species. Let it not be said that we truckled to one, the unparalleled and unconstitutional scope of whose power is only equalled by the sorbid meanness of his rapacious soul. Let it not be said that the English constitution sank before a rebel without dignity and a demagogue without courage. This grand pensionary of bigotry and sedition presumes to stir up the people of England against your high estate. Will the Peers of England quail to this brawling mercenary—this man who has even degraded crime, who has deprived treason of its grandeur and sedition of its sentiment; who is paid for his patriotism, and whose philanthropy is hired by the job—audacious, yet a poltroon—agitating a people, yet picking their pockets; in mind a Catiline, in action a Cleon?*

* The allusion here is to Lyndhurst's famous attack upon O'Connell (April 26, 1836). It is impossible to do justice to it in a line. After painting the 'Liberator' in colours which no one could misinterpret, Lyndhurst went on to say:—'This person has so scathed himself, has so exhibited himself in a variety of postures—not always the most seemly and decent—amid the shouts and applause of a multitude, that all description on my part is wholly unnecessary. But these exhibitions have not been bootless to him; he has received lavish contributions. I

This disturber is in himself nothing. He has neither learning, wit, eloquence, nor refined taste, nor elevated feeling, nor a passionate and creative soul. What ragged ribaldry are his public addresses, whether they emanate from his brazen mouth or from his leaden pen! His pathos might shame the maudlin Romeo of a barn; his invective is the reckless abandonment of the fish-market. Were he a man of genius, he would be unsuited to the career for which he is engaged; for, after all, he is but a slave. But it is the awful character of his master that invests this creature with his terrible consideration. However we may detest or despise the *nisi prius* lawyer hired to insult and injure the realm of England, we know that he is the delegate of the most ancient and powerful priesthood in Europe. It is as the great papal nominee that this O'Connell, with all his vileness, becomes a power to control which requires no common interference.

My Lords, the English nation believes that that interference can be efficiently exercised by your august assembly. In you are reposed their hopes; you will not disappoint them. In a few hours, in obedience to the mandate of the papal priesthood, that shallow voluptuary who is still Prime Minister of England, will call upon your Lordships with cuckoo note, to

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may say ducal contributions, from the connections of the present Government, while at the same time he has wrung, by the aid of the priests, the miserable pittance from the hands of the starving and famishing peasant. This person has in every shape and form insulted your Lordships, your Lordships' House, and many of you individually; he has denounced you, doomed you to destruction, and, availing himself of your courtesy, he comes to your Lordships' bar, he listens to your proceedings, he marks you and measures you as his victims. "Etiam in senatum venit; notat designatque oculis ad cædem unumquemque nostrûm."'

do 'justice to Ireland.' Do it. Justice to Ireland will best be secured by doing justice to England. The people of England created the empire. At the time when we were engaged in that great strife which will rank in the estimation of posterity with the Punic wars and the struggles of the Greeks against Asia, the very men who are now menacing your illustrious order and stirring up war against our national institutions, were in communication with our most inveterate foe, and soliciting invasion. My Lords, you will not forget this; you will not forget to distinguish their pretext from their cause. These men cannot be conciliated. They are your foes because they are the foes of England. They hate our free and fertile isle. They hate our order, our civilisation, our enterprising industry, our sustained courage, our decorous liberty, our pure religion. This wild, reckless, indolent, uncertain, and superstitious race have no sympathy with the English character. Their fair ideal of human felicity is an alternation of clannish broils and coarse idolatry. Their history describes an unbroken circle of bigotry and blood. And now, forsooth, the cry is raised that they have been misgoverned! How many who sound this party shibboleth have studied the history of Ireland? A savage population, under the influence of the Papacy, has, nevertheless, been so regulated, that they have contributed to the creation of a highly-civilised and Protestant empire. Why, is not that the paragon of political science? Could Machiavel teach more? My Lords, shall the delegates of these tribes, under the direction of the Roman priesthood, ride roughshod over our country—over England—haughty, and still imperial England? Forbid it, all the memory of your ancestors! Rest as-

sured that if you perform your high and august office as becomes you, rest assured that in this agony of the Protestant cause and the British empire, the English nation will not desert you. All parties and all sects of Englishmen, in this fierce and yet degrading struggle, must ultimately rally round your House. My Lords, be bold, be resolute, be still 'the pillars of the State.'

April 18, 1836.

LETTER XVII.

TO

THE HOUSE OF LORDS

April 23, 1836

LETTER XVII.

[The former letter of 'Runnymede' produced its due effect. The House of Lords read the Municipal Corporations (Ireland) Bill a second time, but dealt with it in Committee with such effect that, as Lord John Russell piteously complained on June 9, they completely changed the character of the measure. 'We sent up to the other House of Parliament,' said he, 'a Bill for the Regulation of Municipal Corporations of Borough Towns in Ireland. That Bill has been returned to us with the title altered, with the preamble changed, and, of a Bill consisting of 140 clauses, 106 have been in substance omitted, eighteen other clauses have been introduced, and of the whole purport and intention of the original Bill little is to be found in the Bill which has now come down to us.' The result was a conflict between the two Houses of Parliament, a conference, and, in the end, the rejection of the Bill. The Irish brigade were, of course, furious, and on July 5 Mr. Smith O'Brien rose to move certain resolutions expressive of their indignation. Mr. Rigby Wason begged him not to press his motion. O'Connell protested that he was sensible of 'the indignity offered to the people of Ireland,' but thought that the course pursued by O'Brien was injudicious. In the end the matter dropped, and nothing more was heard of Irish Corporations in the last Parliament of the reign of William IV.]

To the House of Lords.

Y LORDS,—You have unfurled the national standard. Its patriotic and hearty motto is, 'Justice for England.' The English nation will support you in your high endeavours. Fear not that they will be backward. They recognise your Lordships as their natural leaders, who have advanced, according to your hereditary duty, to assist them in the extremity of their degraded fortunes. The time is come for bold and vigorous conduct; the time is come to rid ourselves of that base tyranny, offensive to the pride of every Englishman, no matter what his religious sect or class of political opinions. The English nation will not be ruled by the Irish priesthood. Five years of Whig government have not yet so completely broken our once proud spirit that we can submit without a murmur or a struggle to such a yoke. If Athens, even in her lower fortunes, could free herself of her thirty tyrants, let us hope that England, in spite of all the jobs of our corrupt and corrupting Government, may yet chase away those gentlemen who, fresh from the unction of M'Hale* and the mild injunctions of the apostolic Kehoe, have undertaken to guard over the rights and liberties, the property and the religion of Protestant England. We have not reformed the third estate of the realm in order that England should be governed by the nominees of the Papacy. There is not a man in Britain, Tory or

*Archbishop of Tuam—'the Lion of St. Jarlath's.'

Radical, Episcopalian or Presbyterian, who can stand this long; there is not a man in Britain who at the bottom of his heart is not proud of our empire, and who does not despise the inferior race who dare to menace its integrity. However faction may corrupt and machinate, the people of England will never long submit to a Milesian master; and when they reflect upon their present degradation, and are conscious that they have experienced it only to secure in power the dull and desperate remains of a once haughty oligarchy, long baffled in their anti-national attempts upon the free realm of England, the nation will rise in its wrath, and execute vengeance upon the cabal which has thus trifled with this great country's immemorial honour.

The English nation requires justice; and it is not content to receive that justice by instalments—a process that may suit their lately manumitted serfs, but which will not accord with their stern and determined spirits, habituated to the ennobling exercise and the proud enjoyment of an ancient liberty. They require justice, and they will have that justice full and free. It must be meted out speedily and not scantily. They require this justice, with the Peers of England at their head, and the result will prove whether the Milesian peasantry, led on by the papist priesthood, can cope with this proud and powerful society. It is not just to England that the Sovereign should be deprived of his undoubted prerogative; it is not just to England that M'Hale and Kehoe should dictate to our King the servants whom our Royal master should employ; it is not just to England that the King of England should by any such an anti-national process be surrounded by the Ministers, not of his choice,

but of his necessity; it is not just to England that a knot of papist legislators should deal with the polity and property of our Protestant Church; it is not just to England that no English blood in Ireland should be secure from plunder or assassination; it is not just to England that a hired disturber, paid by the Roman priesthood, should ramble over our country to stir up rebellion against your Lordships' august estate; that his ribald tongue should soil and outrage all that we have been taught to love, honour, and obey—our women, our princes, and our laws; and lastly, it is not just to England that its constitution should be attacked, its empire menaced, and its religion scoffed at.

My Lords, the same party that demands justice for Ireland is not less clamorous in its requisition of justice for Canada. Will you grant it?* Justice for Botany Bay, too, is, I have heard, in the market, and the cry is said to be worth some good 2,000*l.* per annum. The noble member for Glasgow, the vigorous writer of that lucid address which I had the honour of transferring from its original Sanscrit and first introducing to the notice of the British public,† has, I believe, already done justice to India. My Lords! when and where is this dangerous nonsense to terminate? How compatible is the prevalence of such windy words with the subsistence of an empire? It may be as well for your Lordships to ponder on the consequences. The English nation formed the empire, ours is the imperial isle, England is the Metropolitan country; and we might as well tear out the living heart from the human form, and bid the

*Disaffection in Canada was at this moment assuming a serious character. The Papineau rebellion broke out in 1837.

†*V. ante*, Letter to Lord William Bentinck, p. 97.

heaving corpse still survive, as suppose that a great empire can endure without some concentration of power and vitality.

My Lords, the season is ripe for action. In spite of all the machinations of the anti-English faction, never was your great assembly more elevated in the esteem and affection of your countrymen than at this perilous hour. The English are a reflecting and observant people; they ponder even amid tumult; they can draw a shrewd moral even from the play of their own passions; and they cannot but feel, that after all the revolutionary rhetoric which has been dinned into their ears of late in panegyric of a Reform Ministry and a Reformed Parliament, and in simultaneous depreciation of your Lordships' power and usefulness, that not only in eloquence and knowledge, in elevation of thought and feeling, and even in practical conduct, your Lordships need fear no comparison with that assembly which, from a confusion of ideas, is in general supposed to be more popular in its elements and character, but that on all occasions when the dignity of the empire and the rights of the subject have been threatened and assailed, the national cause has invariably found in your Lordships' House that support and sympathy which have been denied to it by the other Chamber.

Your Lordships, therefore, commence the conflict with the anti-English party under great advantages. Not only is your cause a just one, and your resolution to maintain its justice unshakable, but there happens in your instance that which unfortunately cannot always be depended on in those great conjunctures which decide the fate of crowns and nations. The sympathy of the nation is arrayed under your banner.

And inasmuch as the popularity which you now enjoy is to be distinguished from that volatile effusion which is the hurry-skurry offspring of ignorance and pride, since it is founded on the surer basis of returning reason and mellowed passions and sharp experiences, you may rest assured that the support of your countrymen will not be withdrawn from you in the hour of trial.

But, my Lords, do not undervalue the enemy which, at the head of the English nation, you are about to combat. If you imagine that you are going to engage only an ignorant and savage population, led on by a loose-tongued poltroon, you will indeed deceive yourselves, and the truth will not be in you. My Lords, you are about to struggle with a foe worthy even of the Peers of England, for he is a foe that has placed his foot upon the neck of Emperors. My Lords, you are about to struggle with the Papacy, and in its favourite and devoted land. Whether the conspiracy of the Irish priests be more successful than the fleets of Spain, and more fatal to the freedom and the faith of England, time can alone prove, and Providence can alone decide. But let us not forget that Heaven aids those who aid themselves, and, firm in the faith that nerved the arms of our triumphant fathers, let us meet without fear that dark and awful power which strikes at once at the purity of our domestic hearths and the splendour of our imperial sway.

April 23, 1836.

LETTER XVIII.

TO

THE LORD CHANCELLOR

April 30, 1836

LETTER XVIII.

[It cannot be said that the promotion of Sir Charles Christopher Pepys to the Chancellorship was a stroke of genius on the part of Lord Melbourne. Greville, who, when his temper is not exacerbated, is one of the best judges of men and things of his generation, says of it: 'Pepys's is perhaps one of the most curious instances of elevation that ever occurred. A good sound lawyer, in leading practice at the Bar, never heard of in politics, no orator, a plain, undistinguished man to whom expectation never pointed, and upon whom the Solicitor-Generalship fell, as it were by accident, finds himself Master of the Rolls a few months after his appointment by the sudden death of Leach, and in little more than one year from that time a Peer and Chancellor.' Greville's amazement is not surprising. Pepys was nothing and nobody. He came out from Cambridge with an ordinary degree in the year 1803 —the year in which Parke and Coltman distinguished themselves as Wranglers. He was the pupil of Tidd and of Romilly; but he was at the Bar for twenty-two years before he was in a position to take silk, and he would probably never have been heard of but for the fact of his having attracted the notice of Earl Fitzwilliam, who sent him into Parliament for Higham Ferrars and for Malton successively. When Sir John Leach, the Master of the Rolls, was compelled to retire through ill-health in September, 1834, Pepys, to the astonishment of everybody, was preferred to his vacant place, and when the Great Seal was put in commission after Brougham's exit from office, he was naturally made one of the Commissioners. When at last it was discovered that the judicial business of the country was suffering somewhat severely from the necessity of employing three judges to do the work of one, Pepys was made Lord Chancellor—not perhaps entirely to the gratification of

suitors in that Court, and certainly not to that of the Bar or of his party in Parliament. According to Campbell, he 'could hardly put two sentences together,' and in the House of Lords was an utter failure. He died in 1851, and the *Times* did not even mention the fact.]

To the Lord Chancellor.

MY LORD,—The gay liver, who, terrified by the consequences of his excesses, takes to water and a temperance society, is in about the same condition as the Whig Ministers in their appointment of a Lord Chancellor, when, still smarting under the eccentric vagaries of a Brougham, they sought refuge in the calm reaction of your sober Lordship. This change from Master Shallow to Master Silence was for a moment amusing; but your Lordship has at length found the faculty of speech, and your astonished countrymen begin to suspect that they may not be altogether the gainers in the great transition from humbug to humdrum. We have escaped from the eagle to be preyed upon by the owl. For your Lordship is also a Reformer, a true Reformer; you are to proceed in the grand course of social amelioration and party jobbing,* and the only substantial difference, it seems, that a harassed nation is to recognise, is that which consists between the devastation of the locust and the destruction of the slug.

Your Lordship has figured during the last week in the double capacity of a statesman and a legislator.

*A reference to the very curious arrangement by which Campbell became for a while Lord Chancellor of Ireland.

With what transcendent success, let the blank dismay that stamped the countenance of the Prime Minister bear flattering witness, as he hung with an air of awkward astonishment on the accents of your flowing eloquence, and listened with breathless surprise, if not admiration, to the development of those sage devices which, by a curious felicity of fortune, have succeeded in arraying against them the superficial prejudices of all parties. Yet one advantage, it cannot be denied, has resulted from your Lordship's last triumphant exhibition. The public at length become acquainted with the object of Lord Langdale's* surprising elevation, and the agreeable office which it appears the noble Master of the Rolls is to fulfil in the Senate of Great Britain. We have heard before of a Lord Chancellor's devil; but my Lord Cottenham is the first guardian of the Great Seal whom his considerate colleagues have supplied not only with a coronet, but a critic.

That your Lordship should be an advocate for 'justice to Ireland' might reasonably have been expected from your eminent situation. Your party may share with you the odium or the glory of your political projects, but the laurels which you have recently acquired by your luminous eloquence and your profound legal knowledge are all your Lordship's own, and I doubt whether any of your friends or your opponents will be aspiring enough to envy you their rich fruition.

And here, as it is the fashion to do 'justice to

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*(Bickersteth.) Lord Cottenham had brought in a Bill for the Reform of the Court of Chancery, which was read a first time in the Lords on April 28, in spite of a somewhat strenuous protest from Lord Langdale.

Whiggism,' I cannot but pause to notice the contrast, so flattering to the judgment and high principle of your Lordship's party, which their legal appointments afford when compared with those of the annihilated Tories, and especially of the late Government. The administration of justice is still a matter of some importance, and we naturally shrink from the party who have entrusted its conduct to men so notoriously incompetent as a Sugden* or a Scarlett,† or placed upon the judgment seat such mere political adventurers as an Alderson and a Parke, a Patterson and a Coleridge, a Taunton and a Tindal! How refreshing is it, after such a prostitution of patronage and power, to turn to a Lord Chief Justice like a Denman, raised to his lofty post by the sheer influence of his unequalled learning and his unrivalled practice, or to recognise the homage which has been paid to professional devotion in the profound person of Mr. Baron Williams!

I say nothing of your Lord Chancellors; one you have discarded, and the other you are about to deprive of his functions. And, indeed, it cannot be denied that the appointment of your Lordship to the custody of the Great Seal, as a preliminary step to the abolition of the office of Lord Chancellor itself,‡ displayed a depth of statecraft in your party for which the nation has hitherto given them scarcely sufficient credit. Had it been entrusted to a Hardwicke, an Eldon, or a Lyndhurst, to some great functionary

*Lord St. Leonards.

†Lord Abinger.

‡There was at this time a great controversy about the division of the judicial from the legislative functions of the Lord Chancellor, and Lord Cottenham's proposals of April 28, 1836—which came to nothing—were in this direction.

to whom the public had been accustomed to look up with confidence, and the profession with respect, some murmurs might naturally have arisen at the menaced disturbance of an ancient order which had long contributed to that pure and learned administration of justice which was once the boast of Britons. But if the Whigs, as their organs daily assure us, are indeed to be our perpetual masters, we may be excused for viewing with indifference, if not with complacency, that promised arrangement by which the most important duties of the State are no longer assigned at the caprice of a party, which, with a singularly sound judgment, has periodically selected for their performance an Erskine, a Brougham, and finally, your learned Lordship. The still haughty Venetians sometimes console themselves with the belief that their State would not have fallen if the last of their Doges had not unfortunately been a plebeian; the Bar of England, that illustrious body which has contributed to our fame and our felicity not less than the most celebrated of our political institutions, may perhaps, in a sympathetic strain of feeling, some day be of opinion that they would not have been expelled from their high and just position in our society, if the last of the Lord Chancellors had been worthy of being their chief; and posterity may perhaps class together, in the same scale of unsuitable elevation, the ignoble Manini and the feeble Cottenham.

My Lord, the same spirit that would expel the heads of our Church from the Senate would banish the head of our law from the King's Council. Under pretext of reform and popular government, your party, as usual, are assailing all the democratic elements of our constitution. The slang distinction of the day be-

tween the political and legal duties of a Lord Chancellor tends, like all the other measures of the party which has elevated your Lordship to the peerage, and is now about to lower you to a clerkship, to the substitution of an oligarchical government. We may yet live to regret that abrogated custom which, by giving the head of the law a precedence over the haughtiest peers, and securing his constant presence in the Cabinet of the sovereign, paid a glorious homage to the majesty of jurisprudence, announced to the world that our political constitution was eminently legal, guaranteed that there should be at least one individual in the realm who was not made a Minister because he was a noble, insured the satisfactory administration of domestic justice, and infused into our transactions with foreign Courts and Cabinets that high and severe spirit of public rectitude which obtained our own rights by acknowledging those of others.

Will the hybrid thing which, under Lord Cottenham's scheme of legal reform, is to be baptized in mockery a Lord Chancellor, afford these great advantages in the Cabinet or the Senate? He is to be a lawyer without a court, and a lawyer without a court will soon be a lawyer without law. The Lord High Chancellor of England will speedily subside into a political nonentity like the President of the Council; that office which is the fitting appanage of pompous imbecility. Lord Cottenham may be excused for believing that, to make a Lord Chancellor it is enough to plant a man upon a woolsack, and thrust a wig upon his head and a gold-embroidered robe upon his back; but the people of England have been accustomed to recognise in a Lord Chancellor a man who has won his way to a great position by the exercise of great

qualities — a man of singular acuteness, and profound learning, and vast experience, and patient study, and unwearied industry — a man who has obtained the confidence of his profession before he challenges the confidence of his country, and who has secured eminence in the House of Commons before he has aspired to superiority in the House of Lords — a man who has expanded from a great lawyer into a great statesman, and who brings to the woolsack the commanding reputation which has been gained in the long and laborious years of an admired career.

My Lord, this is not your portrait. You are the child of reform, the chance offspring of political agitation and factious intrigue. The Whigs have stirred up and made muddy even the fountain of justice; for a moment an airy bubble, glittering in the sunshine, floated on the excited surface; but that brilliant bubble soon burst and vanished, and a scum, thick and obscure, now crests the once pure and tranquil waters.

April 30, 1836.

LETTER XIX.

TO

VISCOUNT MELBOURNE

May 15, 1836

LETTER XIX.

[This letter, the last of the 'Runnymede' series, is a final protest against the attempt of the Whigs to govern England by the help of the Irish vote.]

To Viscount Melbourne.

MY LORD,—I had the honour of addressing you on the eve of your last holidays; the delightful hour of relaxation again approaches: I wish you again to retire to the bowers of Brocket with my congratulations. The campaign about to close has been brief, but certainly not uneventful; I will not say disastrous, because I wish to soothe, rather than irritate, your tortured feelings. The incidents have been crowded, as in the last act of one of those dramas to which it was formerly your ambition to supply an epilogue. Why did that ambition ever become so unnaturally elevated? Why was your Lordship not content to remain agreeable? Why did you aspire to be great? A more philosophical moderation would have saved you much annoyance and your country much evil; yourself some disgraceful situations, perhaps some ludicrous ones. When I last addressed you, your

position was only mischievous; it is now ridiculous. Your dark master, the Milesian Eblis, has at length been vanquished by that justice for which he is so clamorous, and which he has so long outraged. The poisoned chalice of revolutionary venom which your creatures prepared for our august Senate, august although you are a member of it, has been returned to their own lips. The House of Lords, decried for its ignorance and inefficiency by adventurers without talents and without education, has vindicated its claims to the respect of the country for its ability and its knowledge. Held up to public scorn by your hirelings as the irresponsible tyrants of the land, a grateful nation recognises in the Peers of England the hereditary trustees of their rights and liberties, the guardians of their greatness, and the eloquent and undaunted champions of the integrity of their empire. The greater portion of the nation has penetrated the superficial characteristics of Whig Machiavelism. Your hollow pretences all evaporated, your disgraceful manœuvres all detected, your reckless expedients all exhausted, we recognise only a desperate and long-baffled oligarchy, ready to sacrifice, for the possession of a power for which they are incompetent, the laws, the empire, and the religion of England.

My Lord, it requires no prophet to announce that the commencement of the end is at length at hand. The reign of delusion is about to close. The man who obtains property by false pretences is sent to Botany Bay. Is the party that obtains power by the same means to be saved harmless? You have established a new colony in Australia; it wants settlers. Let the Cabinet emigrate. My Lord Glenelg, with all his Canadian experience, will make an excellent colonial

governor. And there your Lordship may hide your public discomfiture and your private mortification. And, indeed, a country where nature regulates herself on an exactly contrary system to the scheme she adopts in the older and more favoured world has some pretensions, it would seem, to the beneficial presence of your faction. The land where the rivers are salt, where the quadrupeds have fins and the fish feet, where everything is confused, discordant, and irregular, is indicated by Providence as the fitting scene of Whig government.

The Whigs came into office under auspices so favourable, that they never could have been dislodged from their long-coveted posts except by their own incompetence and dishonesty. From circumstances which it would not be difficult to explain, they were at once sanctioned by the King and supported by the people. In the course of five years they have at once deceived the sovereign and deluded the nation. After having reconstructed the third estate for their own purposes, in the course of five years a majority of the English representatives is arrayed against them; wafted into power on the wings of the public press, dusty from the march of intellect, and hoarse with clamouring about the spirit of the age, in the course of five years they are obliged to declare war against the journals, the faithful mirrors of the public mind. With peace, reform, and retrenchment for their motto, in the course of five years they have involved us in a series of ignoble wars, deluged the country with jobs and placemen, and have even contrived to increase the amount of the public debt.

What rashness and what cowardice, what petty prudence and what vast recklessness, what arrogance and

what truckling, are comprised in the brief annals of this last assault of your faction upon the constitutional monarchy of England! Now hinting at organic changes, now whimpering about the pressure from without; dragged through the mud on the questions of military discipline and the pension list, yet ready at the next moment to plunder the Church or taint the very fountain of justice; threatening the Peers of England on one day, and crouching on the next before the Irish priests! A few months back you astounded the public by announcing that you had purchased a Lord Chancellor at the price of three coronets.* The cost has been considered not only exorbitant but unconstitutional: but the nation, wearied by your vexatious delay of justice, was content to be silent, and awaited the anticipated presence of a Minos. You produced Cottenham. Moses and his green spectacles was not in a more ludicrous position than your Lordship with your precious purchase. Yet this impotent conclusion was announced in January as a *coup-d'état,* and the people of England were daily congratulated on an arrangement now universally acknowledged as the most ridiculous act even of your administration. Moralists have contrasted the respective careers of the knave and the fool, and have consoled humanity by the conviction that the scoundrel in the long run is not more fortunate than the simpleton. I leave this controverted question to the fabler and the essayist; the man of the world, however, will not be surprised at the fate of a political party, the enormity of whose career is only equalled by the feebleness of their conduct.

*Those of Lady Stratheden (wife of John, Lord Campbell); Bickersteth (Lord Langdale), and Pepys (Lord Cottenham).

My Lord, the Whigs a century back or so were at least no fools. When the Dukes of Somerset and Argyll attended a Privy Council without being summoned,* and forced a dying Queen to appoint the Duke of Shrewsbury Prime Minister, they did not perpetrate a greater outrage than the Whig leader, who, by virtue of a papist conspiracy, returned to the post from which he had been properly expelled, and became the Minister, not of the King's choice but of the King's necessity. These same Whig leaders, when thus unconstitutionally established in power, introduced the Peerage Bill, which if passed into a law, would have deprived the Sovereign of his prerogative of creating further Peers, and they remodelled the House of Commons by the Septennial Act.

The Whigs in 1718 sought to govern the country by 'swamping' the House of Commons; in 1836 it is the House of Lords that is to be 'swamped!' In 1718 the *coup-d'état* was to prevent any further increase of the Lords; in 1836 the Lords are to be outnumbered: different tactics to obtain the same purpose — the establishment of an oligarchical government by virtue of a Republican cry. Where Argyll and Walpole failed, is it probable that Lord Melbourne and Lord John Russell will succeed? The Whigs, a century back, were men of great station, great talents,

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* See *Hume*, chap. xi. par. 43. Queen Anne's life was despaired of (July 30, 1714). 'The Committee of the Council assembled at the Cockpit adjourned to Kensington. The Dukes of Somerset and Argyll, informed of the desperate situation in which she lay, repaired to the palace, and without being summoned, entered the Council Chamber. The members were surprised at their appearance, but the Duke of Shrewsbury thanked them for their readiness to give their assistance at such a critical juncture, and desired they would take their places.' Queen Anne died in the morning of August 1.

great eloquence, supported by two-thirds of the nobles of the land; by the Dissenters, because they attacked the Church, inasmuch as the Establishment, like every other national institution, is an obstacle to oligarchical power; and by the commercial and 'moneyed interest' of the country, now, like every other interest of property, arrayed against them. And what are you? Is it your eloquence, your knowledge, your high descent, and vast property, or the following of your order, that introduce you into the King's Cabinet? No, you are the slave of a slave, the delegate of a deputy, the second-hand nominee of a power the most odious and anti-national in existence, foreign to all the principles and alien to all the feelings of Britons. My Lord, the popular and boisterous gale that originally drove your party into power has long since died away, and though some occasional and fitful gusts may have deceived you into believing that your sails were to be ever set and your streamers ever flying, the more experienced navigators have long detected the rising of the calm yet steady breeze fatal to your course. It is a wind which may be depended on — a great monsoon of national spirit, which will clear the seas of those political pirates who have too long plundered us under false colours.

And yet, my Lord, let us not part in anger. Yours is still a gratifying, even a great position. Notwithstanding all your public degradation and all private annoyances,* that man is surely to be envied

*The famous case, Norton *v.* Lord Melbourne, was making much noise at this time, and was tried on June 26. The jury gave their verdict for Melbourne, and the Whigs were loud in their assertion that Lord Grantley had pushed the matter on for political purposes. The vagaries of Lady Caroline Lamb had been a source of deep and bitter trouble, but they of course had ceased with her death in 1828.

who has it in his power to confer an obligation on every true-hearted Englishman. And this your Lordship still can do; you can yet perform an act which will command the gratitude of every lover of his country; you can — RESIGN.

May 15, 1836.

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